



CHARLES XII.



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THE *Opus*  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BY  
MR. DE VOLTAIRE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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C. J. C.



~~DISCOURSE~~

DISCOURSE  
ON THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.

**F**EW are the princes whose actions merit a particular history. In vain have most of them been the objects of slander or flattery; small is their number whose memory is preserved, and it would be more inconsiderable, were the good only remembered.

Those princes have the best title to immortality, whose actions have benefited mankind. The affection of Louis XII. for his people will be had in remembrance as long as France endures. The many failings of Francis I. will be excused for the sake of the arts and sciences of which he was the father. Blest will be the memory of Henry IV. who conquered his kingdom first by his valour, and then by his clemency. The generosity of Louis XIV. in protecting those arts which had their rise from Francis I. will be ever applauded.

A contrary reason preserves the memory of bad princes, like that of fires, plagues and inundations.

Conquerors are a species between good kings and tyrants, but partake most of the latter, and have a glaring reputation. We are eager to know the most mi-

nute circumstances of their lives. Such is the miserable weakness of mankind, that they look with admiration upon persons glorious for mischief, and are better pleased to be talking of the destroyer than the founder of an empire.

As for those princes who have made no figure either in peace or war; who have neither been remarkable for great virtues, nor vices; their lives furnish so little matter either for imitation, or instruction, that they are not worthy of notice. Of so many emperors of Rome, Greece, Germany and Moscovy; of so many sultans, caliphs, popes and kings, how few are there whose names deserve to be recorded any where, but in chronological tables, where they are of no other use but to mark the epochas?

There is a vulgar among princes as well as among the rest of mankind; yet such is the itch of writing, that a prince is no sooner dead but the world is immediately filled with memoirs and lives of him, and the secret histories of his court. By these means books have been so multiplied, that were a man to live an hundred years, and employ them all in reading, he would not be able to run over all that has been published relating to the history of Europe for the two last centuries.

This desire of transmitting such useless stories to posterity, and of fixing the attention of future ages upon the most common events, is owing to the weakness of those who have long lived in a court, and have had the misfortune to be engaged in public affairs. They think the court they have lived in the finest; their king the greatest; and the affairs they have been concerned in

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the most important that ever were. And they imagine posterity will behold them in the same light.

If a prince has had wars abroad, troubles or intrigues at home; if he buys the friendship of his neighbours or they purchase his; if after some victories, or defeats, he makes peace; his subjects are so dazzled with the glitter of these events, that they look upon their own as the most remarkable age since the creation: and what then? this prince dies; new measures are taken; the intrigues of his court, his mistresses, ministers, generals, wars, nay he himself is forgotten.

Ever since Christian princes have been tricking one another, making sometimes peace, sometimes war, they have signed abundance of treaties, and fought as many battles, done many glorious, and as many infamous actions. Yet should this heap of transactions be transmitted to posterity, they would most of them confound and destroy each other, and the memory of those only would survive, which have occasioned great revolutions, or which, having been related by good authors, are preserved like pictures of obscure persons, only because they were drawn by a masterly hand.

A particular history of Charles XII. of Sweden had not increased this public grievance, were it not that he and his rival Peter Alexiowitz, the greater man far of the two, must be allowed by all the world the most extraordinary persons who have been known for many ages. Yet was not the vain pleasure of telling strange stories our motive for undertaking this history; but the consideration of the benefit princes may receive from this book, should it ever come into their hands.

Must not any king who reads the story of Charles XII.



### *A Discourse on the History*

be immediately cured of the vanity of being a conqueror? Where is the prince who can say, I have greater courage, more virtues, more resolution, more strength of body, greater skill in war, or better troops than Charles XII? If with all these favourable circumstances and after so many victories he was so unfortunate, what may other princes expect, who shall have as much ambition, with less capacity and fewer advantages?

This history is composed from the relations of some persons of distinction, who have spent several years with Charles XII. and Peter the Great, emperor of Moscovy; and retreating long after the death of those princes, to a country of liberty, can have no interest in disguising the truth.

Nothing is advanced here but what is warranted by unquestionable eye-witnesses; which makes this history very different from those Gazettes which have appeared under the title of Lives of Charles XII.

Many little skirmishes between the Moscovite and Swedish officers are omitted; for it is the Life of the King of Sweden, not of his officers, that is here designed; nay, and of his life we have only selected the most important events. The history of a prince is not to tell all he ever did, but what he did deserving to be known to future ages.

It is proper to remark, that many things which were true in 1728, the time of writing this history, are not so at present. For instance; trade is more encouraged than it was in Sweden. The Polish infantry have regimental clothes, and are better disciplined: for in history the time in which an author wrote ought to be considered. To read only the memoirs of the cardinal de

Retz, one would really take the French nation for a set of enthusiasts, breathing nothing but faction, madness and civil war. To read the history of the fortunate years of Louis XIV. one would judge them a people born only for obedience, conquest, and the polite arts. And whosoever shall see any memoirs of the first years of Louis XV. will find the French entirely devoted to luxury and avarice, and quite regardless of every thing else.

The present Spaniards are not the Spaniards of Charles V. and yet they may deserve that character in a few years. The English of this age no more resemble the fanatics in Cromwell's time, than the monks and Monsignori, who fill the streets of Rome, are like the ancient Scipio's. I doubt whether the Swedish troops would suddenly be so formidable as those of Charles XII. We say of a man, that he was brave at such a time; and so we may say of a nation, they were so and so in such a year, or under such an administration.

If any prince or minister of state should meet with disagreeable truths in this book, let them consider that as they act in a public capacity, they are obliged to give an account of their actions to the public. Such is the price of greatness. It is the business of history to record, not to flatter; and the only way to oblige mankind to speak well of us is to do good to them.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.



BOOK I.

The CONTENTS.

*An abridgment of the history of Sweden, to Charles XII. His education and enemies. The character of the Czar, Peter Alexiowitz; his enterprizes and designs. Charles is at once attacked by Moscow, Poland, and Denmark. He leaves Stockholm at sixteen years old, and with eight thousand Swedes defeats an hundred thousand Moscovites.*

**S**WEDEN and Finland make up a kingdom one third part bigger than France, but far less fruitful, and at present less populous. This country, which is about two hundred of our leagues broad, and three hundred long, extends from south to north, from the 55th degree of latitude to the 70th, in a very severe climate, which scarce knows the returns of spring or autumn. The winter prevails there nine months in the year; the heats of summer immediately succeed to an excessive cold; and the frosts are renewed in the month of October, without any of those insensible gradations, which in other countries usher in the seasons, and render the alteration more agreeable. But nature in return has given them a serene sky, and a pure air. The almost constant heat of the summer produces flowers and fruits in a very short time; and the long nights of winter are tempered by the evening and morning twilights, which last in proportion

to the sun's distance from Sweden : and the light of the moon, which is not obscured by any cloud, but rather increased by the reflection of the snow, which covers the ground, and very often by the Aurora Borealis, makes it as commodious to travel in Sweden by night as by day. The cattle are smaller there, than in the southern parts of Europe, for want of pasturage; but the men are larger. The pure air they breathe gives them health, and the rigour of the climate strength; they even live to a greater age than other men, if not infeeblled by the immoderate use of wines and strong liquors, which the northern nations seem to be the more fond of, the less nature has indulged them with those productions.

The Swedes are well-made, strong and active, capable of sustaining the severest labours, hunger, and want; they are warriors from their infancy, high-spirited, with more courage than industry, having long neglected, and at present making slow advances in their improvements of commerce, which alone can supply them with what their climate denies them. It was principally from Sweden, one part of which is yet called Gothland, that the swarm of Goths issued, which like a deluge overspread the face of Europe, and wrested it from the hands of the Roman Emperors; who for the space of five hundred years usurped the dominion of, and tyrannized over it.

The northern nations at that time were far more populous than they are at present; as their religion by admitting a plurality of wives, allowed the inhabitants a liberty of furnishing the state with more subjects; and as the women themselves knew no reproach but that of barrenness and idleness; and being as laborious and as strong as the men, they bore children earlier and longer.

Sweden was always free, 'till about the middle of the fourteenth century. In so long a space of time there were several revolutions in the government, but the innovations were always in favour of liberty. Their chief magistrate had the name of King, a title which in different countries is attended with very different powers: for in France and Spain it carries with it the notion of absolute dominion, and in Poland, Sweden and England, that of limited. This King could do nothing with-



out the senate, and the senate depended upon the states general, who were often called together. The representatives of the nation in these great assemblies were the nobility, the bishops, the deputies of towns, and in process of time, the very peasants were incorporated into that assembly, a class of people, in other places, unjustly despised, and enslaved almost throughout all the north.

About the year 1492, this nation so jealous of its liberty, and which yet values itself upon the reputation of having conquered Rome thirteen hundred years ago, was brought into subjection by a woman, and a people less powerful than the Swedes.

Margaret of Valdemar, the Semiramis of the north, and queen of Denmark and Norway, conquered Sweden by force and stratagem, and united those three large dominions into one kingdom. After her decease Sweden was rent by civil wars, alternately shook off the Danish yoke, and submitted to it; was sometimes governed by kings, and sometimes by administrators. About the year 1520, it was horribly oppressed by two tyrants at the same time. The one was Christiern the second, king of Denmark, a monster made up of vices, without the least intermixture of virtue; the other was an archbishop of Upsal, primate of the kingdom, and as cruel as Christiern. These two by agreement seized in one day upon the consuls, the magistrates of Stockholm, and ninety four senators, and caused them to be executed by the common hangman, under pretence that they were excommunicated by the pope for having defended the rights of the state against the archbishop. Then they gave up the city to plunder, and the inhabitants were butchered, without distinction of age or sex.

Whilst these two men combined to oppress, and disagreeing only in dividing the spoil, were employed in the most tyrannical exercise of arbitrary power, and the utmost cruelties of revenge, a new event changed the face of affairs in the north.

Gustavus Vasa, a young man descended of the antient race of the kings of that country, arises from the forests of Dalecarlie, where he lay concealed, and takes upon him



the deliverance of Sweden. He was one of those great genius's, whom nature so rarely forms, and who are born with all the qualifications necessary to govern mankind. The advantage of an amiable person and his majestic air gained him followers from the first moment of his appearance. His eloquence, which received an additional force from the agreeableness of his manner, was the more persuasive, as it was less artful. His enterprising genius formed such designs, as appear rash to the vulgar, and are only brave in the eyes of great men, and which, however difficult, his indefatigable courage constantly crowned with success. He was intrepid with prudence, calm in an age of cruelty, and, it is said, as virtuous as the head of a party can be.

Gustavus Vaza had been the hostage of Christiern, and detained a prisoner against the law of nations. Upon his escape he wandered about the mountains, and woods of Dalecarlie disguised like a peasant. He was even reduced to the necessity of working in the copper-mines for the support of life, and his better concealment. But thus buried as he was under ground, he had the magnanimity to entertain thoughts of dethroning the tyrant. He discovered himself to the peasants, and presently appeared to them a person of a superior nature, to whom the common sort of men are naturally inclined to submit. And in a little time he trained up those savages into a well-disciplined body of troops. He gave battle to Christiern and the archbishop, gained several victories over them, and drove them both out of Sweden; and at last was very justly chosen by the states king of that country, of which he was already the deliverer.

He was scarce settled upon the throne, before he entered upon another design more difficult than his conquests. The real tyrants of the state were the bishops, who being possessed of almost all the riches in Sweden, had employed their wealth to oppress the subjects, and make war upon their kings. This power was the more formidable, as the ignorance of the people had made it sacred. He punished the Romish religion for the crimes of its ministers, and in less than two years introduced Lutheranism into Sweden, more by the dexterity of his management, than by

his authority. And having thus conquered the kingdom, as he said, from the Danes and the clergy, he reigned prosperous and absolute till he was seventy years of age, dying full of glory, and leaving his family and religion in possession of the throne.

One of his descendants was that Gustavus Adolphus, whom they call the great Gustavus. He conquered Ingria, Livonia, Bremen, Verden, Wismar, and Pomerania, without reckoning up above an hundred places in Germany, which were given back by Sweden after his death. He shook the throne of Ferdinand II. and protected the Lutherans in Germany; wherein he was privately assisted by Rome itself; which stood far more in awe of the emperor's power, than that of heresy. This was the prince who by his victories effectually contributed to the depression of the house of Austria, though the glory of that transaction was given to cardinal Richlieu; who knew well how to procure himself the reputation of those great actions, which Gustavus was contented with barely performing. He was upon the point of carrying his arms beyond the Danube, and perhaps of dethroning the emperor, when he was killed in the thirty-seventh year of his age, at the battle of Lutzen, which he gained against Wallstein, carrying with him to the grave the name of great, the lamentations of the North, and the esteem of his enemies.

His daughter Christina, a lady of an extraordinary genius, chose rather to converse with men of learning, than to reign over a people, whose knowledge was confined to war. She became as illustrious for quitting the throne, as her ancestors had been for conquering or securing it. The protestants have been too severe upon her memory, as if no person could be possessed of great virtues, without adhering to Luther; and the papists have triumphed too much in the conversion of a woman, whose greatest qualification was her philosophy. She retired to Rome, where she passed the remainder of her days among the sciences she loved, and for which she had renounced the crown at the age of twenty-seven years.

Before her abdication she engaged the states of Sweden

to elect her cousin Charles Gustavus X. son to the Count Palatine, and duke of Deux Ponts to succeed her. This prince added new conquests to those of Gustavus Adolphus; he immediately carried his arms into Poland; where he was victorious in the celebrated battle of Warsaw, which lasted for three days. He for a long time was engaged in a successful war against the Danes; besieged them in their capital, reunited Schonen to Sweden, and settled the Duke of Holsteln in the possession of Sleswick, at least for a time; at length having experienced some of the inconstancies of fortune, and made peace with his enemies, he turned his ambition against his subjects, and laid the design of establishing an arbitrary power in Sweden, but was cut off in the thirty-seventh year of his age, like the great Gustavus, without completing his project, which his son Charles XI. was so happy as to accomplish.

Charles XI. was a soldier like his ancestors, but more absolute than them all. He abolished the authority of the senate, which was declared to be the senate of the king, and not of the kingdom. He was frugal, vigilant, and indefatigable; qualifications which would have endeared him to all, if his tyranny had not gained him the dread, rather than the affection of his subjects.

In 1680, he married Ulric Eleonora, daughter to Frederick III. king of Denmark, a princess distinguished by her virtue, and worthy of greater confidence than her husband reposed in her. Of this marriage on the 27th of June 1682, was born king Charles XII. a man the most extraordinary, perhaps, that ever appeared in the world. All the great qualities of his ancestors were united in him; nor had he any other fault or misfortune, but that he carried them beyond all bounds. It is of him therefore we now propose to write what is come to our knowledge, concerning his person and his actions.

At six years of age he was taken from the women, and placed under the tuition of Mr. de Norcospenser, a man of wisdom and experience. The first book he was made to read was Puffendorf's introduction to the history of Europe, that he might have an early knowledge of his own dominions, and those of his neighbours. He after-

wards learned the German language, which he always spoke for the future, as well as his mother-tongue. At seven years of age, he could manage a horse; and the violent exercises he delighted in, and which discovered his inclinations to war, laid the early foundations of a vigorous constitution, which enabled him to support the fatigues his natural disposition inclined him to undergo.

Though good-natured in his infancy, he discovered an invincible obstinacy; the only way to gain upon him was to touch upon his honour; if they named but glory, they could obtain any thing from him. He had a great aversion to learn Latin; but when they told him, that the kings of Poland and Denmark understood it, he soon applied himself to that language, and retained so much of it as enabled him to speak it all the rest of his life. They endeavoured to engage him to learn French after the same manner; but he could not be prevailed upon, so long as he lived, ever to make use of it, not even with the French ambassadors, who understood no other language.

As soon as he had some little knowledge in Latin, they made him translate Quintus Curtius; and he took a fancy to that book, which the subject inspired him with rather than the style. The person who explained this author to him, having asked him what he thought of Alexander, "I think," says the Prince, "that I would be like him;" but says the other, "he lived but two and thirty years. Ah," replies he, "and is not that enough, when one has conquered kingdoms?" They did not fail to carry these answers to the king his father, who, upon hearing them, would cry out, "This child will excell me, and even go beyond the great Gustavus." One day he was diverting himself in the king's apartment with looking upon two plans, the one of a town in Hungary, taken by the Turks from the emperor, and the other of Riga the capital of Livonia, a province conquered by the Swedes about a century ago. Under the plan of the town in Hungary were these words taken from the book of Job, "The Lord gave it to me, the Lord hath taken it from me; blessed be the name of the Lord." The young Prince, upon reading this,



strait took a pencil, and wrote under the plan of Riga, "The Lord hath given it to me, and the Devil shall not take it from me." Thus in the most indifferent actions of his childhood some little traces of his resolute disposition would often fall from him, which discovered what he would one day be.

He was eleven years old, when he lost his mother. This princess died on the 5th of August, 1693. of a distemper which arose from the inquietudes her husband had given her, and her own endeavours to conceal them. Charles XI. had stripped a great number of his subjects of their wealth, by the ministration of a certain court of justice, called the chamber of liquidations, erected by his sole authority. A multitude of citizens, nobility and tradesmen, farmers, widows and orphans, ruined by that chamber, filled the streets of Stockholm, and daily uttered their fruitless complaints at the gate of the palace. The queen assisted the distressed with all she had in her possession. She gave them her money, her jewels, her furniture, and even her very cloaths. And when she had no more to bestow, she threw herself in tears at her husband's feet, and besought him to have pity upon his subjects. The king gravely answered, "Madam, we have taken you to bring us children, not to give us advice;" and from that time he treated her with a severity that shortened her days.

He died himself within four years after her, on the 15th of April 1697, in the forty second year of his age, and the thirty-seventh of his reign, at a time when the empire, Spain and Holland on the one side, and France on the other, were prepared to remit the decision of their disputes to his mediation, and when he had already planned out overtures of peace between those powers.

He left to his son, then fifteen years old, a throne secured and respected abroad; subjects poor, but valiant and loyal; a treasury in good order, and managed by able ministers.

Charles XII. upon his coming to the crown, not only found himself absolute and undisturbed master of Sweden and Finland, but also of Livonia, Carelia, and Ingria; he was also possessed of Wismar, Wibourg, the isles of



Rugen, Oesel, and the most beautiful part of Pomerania, with the dutchy of Bremen and Verden, all the conquests of his ancestors, and secured to the crown by long possession, and the solemn treaties of Munster and Oliva, supported by the terror of the Swedish arms. The peace of Ryswick, begun under the direction of the father, was concluded under that of the son, and he found himself the mediator of Europe, from the first moment of his reign.

The laws of Sweden fix the majority of their kings to the age of fifteen years. But Charles XI. who was entirely absolute, put off the majority of his son by his last will 'till he should come to be eighteen; and by this disposition he favoured the ambitious views of his mother Edwiga Eleonora of Holstein, the dowager of Charles X. who was appointed by the king her son to be guardian to the young king her grandson, and regent of the kingdom, in conjunction with a council of five persons.

She immediately gave orders that the funeral of her son Charles XI. should be solemnized with a magnificence to which Sweden had never been accustomed; and farther required that the citizens of Stockholm should mourn for him full three years. It seemed as if she would force them to a greater expression of external grief, as they were less inwardly concerned for the loss of a prince, who had taken from them their liberty and their substance.

The regent had born a share in the administration under the reign of the king her son. She was now advanced in years; but her ambition, which was by far superior to her abilities, made her hope to enjoy long the sweets of power under the king her grandson. She kept him as much as she could from intermeddling with business. The young prince usually passed his time in hunting, or reviewing his troops, and would sometimes even exercise with them: these amusements seemed only the natural effect of the vivacity of his age. He discovered no dissatisfaction in his conduct, which could give the regent any uneasiness, and she flattered herself that his spirits would be so dissipated by these exercises as to ren-

der him incapable of application, and give her the opportunity of governing the longer.

One day in the month of November, the same year that his father died, when he had been taking a review of several regiments, and Piper the counsellor of state stood by him, the king appeared quite lost in a depth of thought. "May I take the liberty, says Piper to him, of asking your majesty upon what it is that your thoughts are so seriously employed?" "I am thinking," answers the king, "that I am capable of commanding those brave fellows yonder, and do not care that either they or I should receive orders from a woman." Piper immediately laid hold on the opportunity of raising his fortune, and knowing his own interest insufficient to venture on so dangerous an enterprize as the removal of the queen from the regency, and hastening the king's majority, he proposed the affair to count Axel Sparre, who was a man of spirit, and sought to make himself considerable: he flattered him with the thought of being made the king's confident, which Sparre very easily believed, took the whole upon himself, and laboured for none but Piper. The counsellors of the regency were soon drawn into the scheme, and hastily proceeded to the execution of it, that they might thereby the more readily recommend themselves to the king's esteem.

They went in a body to propose it to the queen who did not in the least expect such a declaration. The States General were then assembled, and the counsellors of the regency laid the matter before them. They were all unanimous in their approbation, and the point was carried with a rapidity, that nothing could withstand; so that Charles XII. did but wish to reign, and in three days the States conferred the government upon him. The queen's power and interest fell in an instant, and she afterwards led a private life, which was more suitable to her age, though less to her humour. The king was crowned on the 24th of December following. He made his entry into Stockholm upon a sorrel horse, shod with silver, having a scepter in his hand, and a crown upon his head, amidst the acclamations of a whole people, a-

dorers of every novelty, and forming to themselves great expectations from a young prince.

The ceremony of the consecration and coronation belongs to the archbishop of Upsal, and is almost the only privilege remaining to him among so many as were claimed by his predecessors. After having anointed the king according to custom, whilst he was holding the crown in his hands, in order to put it upon his head, Charles snatched it hastily from the archbishop, and crowned himself, looking sternly all the while upon the poor prelate. The crowd, who are always easily imposed on by an air of grandeur, applauded this action of the king. Even those, who had groaned most under the tyranny of the father, were betrayed into the folly of praising in the son that stern behaviour which was the presage of their slavery.

As soon as Charles was become master of the government, he gave his ear and the management of affairs to counsellor Piper, who was in reality his first minister, tho' he wanted the name. He soon after created him a count, which is a dignity of great eminence in Sweden, and not an empty title, to be taken up without any consequence.

The beginning of the king's administration did not raise any favourable ideas of him; he seemed to have been more impatient after rule, than deserving of it. He had indeed no dangerous passion; but there was nothing to be observed in his conduct, except the transports of youth and obstinacy. He appeared proud and careless of business. Even the ambassadors, who resided at his court, took him for a person of a mean capacity, and represented him as such to their masters. The Swedes had entertained the same opinion of him themselves, so that no one as yet knew his real character; he was not even acquainted with it himself, 'till the storms, which gathered all at once in the North, furnished him with an opportunity of displaying those great talents which as yet lay concealed.

Three powerful princes, taking the advantage of his youth, conspired his ruin almost at the same instant. The first was Frederick IV. king of Denmark his cousin; the second Augustus, elector of Saxony, and king of Poland; Peter the Great, Czar of Moscow, was the third and the most dangerous. It will be necessary to lay open the ori-

ginal of these wars which produced such great events; and to begin with Denmark.

Of the two sisters of Charles XII. the eldest was married to the duke of Holstein, a young prince of great courage and good nature. The duke, oppressed by the king of Denmark, came to Stockholm with his princess, to throw himself into the king's protection, and ask his assistance, not only as he was his brother-in-law, but as king of a nation which bore an irreconcilable hatred to the Danes.

The ancient house of Holstein, sunk into that of Oldenburg, had been advanced to the throne of Denmark by election in 1449. All the kingdoms of the North were at that time elective: but the kingdom of Denmark soon after became hereditary. One of the kings named Christiern III. had so great an affection for his brother Adolphus, as we scarce ever find an instance of among princes. He knew not how to let him live without the exercise of sovereign power, and yet he could not dismember his own dominions. He divided with him by a most extravagant agreement the dutchies of Holstein-Gottorp, and Sleswick. The descendants of Adolphus were ever after to govern in Holstein in conjunction with the kings of Denmark, so that the two dutchies were to belong to them both in common, and the king of Denmark to do nothing in Holstein without the duke, nor the duke without the king. So strange an union, of which we have yet had a parallel instance in the same family within these few years, was for near fourscore years the constant occasion of disputes between the branch of Denmark, and that of Holstein-Gottorp; the kings endeavouring always to oppress the dukes, and the dukes to be independent. It had cost the last duke his liberty and sovereignty, but he recovered both at the conferences of Altena, in 1689, by the interposition of Sweden, England, and Holland, who were guarantees for the execution of the treaty. But, as a treaty between princes is frequently no more than a submission to necessity, 'till such time as the stronger is able to oppress the weaker, the dispute was revived with more virulence than ever between the new king of Denmark and the young duke. And whilst the duke was at Stockholm,



the Dane had already committed some acts of hostility in the country of Holstein, and entered into a private league with the king of Poland, to fall upon the king of Sweden himself.

Frederick Augustus, elector of Saxony, whom neither the eloquence and negotiations of the abbe de Polignac, nor the great qualifications of the prince of Conti, his competitor for the crown, could set aside from being elected king of Poland about two years before, was a prince still less famous for his incredible strength of body, than for his bravery and gallantry of mind. His court made the greatest figure of any in Europe next to that of Louis XIV. No prince was ever more generous or liberal, nor distributed his favours with a better grace. He had bought one half of the voices of the Polish nobility, and forced the other by the approach of a Saxon army. He judged it necessary to have his troops about him for the better security of his throne; but he wanted a pretence for retaining them in Poland. These therefore were designed to be sent against the king of Sweden in Livonia, upon the occasion I am now going to relate.

Livonia, the most beautiful and fruitful province of the North, belonged formerly to the knights of the Teutonic order. The Moscovites, Poles, and Swedes, had since severally disputed the possession of it. But Sweden had enjoyed it for near an hundred years, and was solemnly confirmed in it by the peace of Oliva.

The late king Charles XI. in the exercise of his severities towards his subjects had not spared the Livonians. He had taken from them their privileges, and part of their estates. Patkul, who has since been unhappily famous for his tragical death, was deputed by the nobility of Livonia to bear to the throne the complaints of the province. He addressed his master in a manner very respectful, and full of that masculine eloquence, which calamity inspires, when joined with courage; but princes too often look upon public addresses as vain ceremonies, which it is customary to endure, without paying any regard to them. However Charles XI. who knew how to dissimble, when he did not give himself up to the transports of his passion, gently struck Patkul upon the shoulder; ' You have spoke



‘for your country, says he, like a brave man, and I love you for it, go on.’ But within a few days after he caused him to be declared guilty of high-treason, and as such to be condemned. Patkul, who had hid himself, made his escape, and carried his resentments with him into Poland. He was afterwards admitted into the presence of king Augustus. Charles XI. was dead, but the sentence of Patkul and his indignation yet survived. He represented to the king of Poland how easy it was to conquer Livonia; the people in despair, and ready to shake off the Swedish yoke; the king a child, and unable to defend himself. These solicitations were well received by a prince, already tempted with the hopes of this conquest. All was immediately prepared for a sudden invasion, without even recourse had to the vain formality of declarations and manifestos. The storm grew thick at the same time on the side of Moscovy.

Peter Alexiowitz, Czar of Russia, had already made himself formidable by the battle he had gained over the Turks in 1697, and by the conquest of Asoph, which opened to him the empire of the Black Sea. But it was by actions far more glorious than his conquests, that he merited the name of Great. Moscovy or Russia takes in the north of Asia, and of Europe, and from the frontiers of China extends fifteen hundred leagues to the borders of Poland and Sweden. And yet this immense country was scarce known to Europe before the Czar Peter. The Moscovites were less civilized than the Mexicans, when discovered by Cortez: born the slaves of masters as barbarous as themselves, they were sunk in a deep ignorance of all arts and sciences, and in such an insensibility of their use, as prevented all industry in the cultivation of them. An old law held sacred by them forbade them under pain of death to go out of their country without the leave of their patriarch. And yet this law, made on purpose to take from them all opportunities of growing sensible of their bondage was acceptable to a nation, which, in the depth of its ignorance and misery, disdained all commerce with foreign nations.

The aera of the Moscovites began with the creation of the world: they reckoned up 7207 years at the begin-

ning of the last century, without being able to give any reason why they did so. The first day of their year answered to the 13th of our month of September. And they alledged this reason for it, that it was probable that God created the world in autumn, in the season when the fruits of the earth are in their full maturity. Thus the only appearances of knowledge they had among them were founded upon gross mistakes; not one of them had the least apprehension that the Autumn of Moscovy might be the Spring of another country in opposite climates. Nor is it long since the people at Moscow would have burnt the secretary of a Persian ambassador, because he had foretold an eclipse of the sun. They did not so much as know the use of figures, but in all their computations made use of little beads, which were strung upon wire; nor had they any other way of reckoning in all their counting-houses, not even in the treasury of the Czar.

Their religion was, and still is, that of the Greek church, but intermixed with superstitions, to which they more firmly adhered in proportion to their extravagance, and the heavier weight of their yoke. Few Moscovites would venture to eat a pigeon, because the Holy Ghost is painted in form of a dove. They regularly observed four Lents in a year, and in those times of abstinence dared not presume to eat either eggs or milk. God and St. Nicholas were the objects of their worship, and next to them the Czar and the patriarch. The authority of the last was as boundless as their ignorance. He gave sentences of death, and inflicted the most cruel punishments, without any appeal from his tribunal. Twice a year he made a solemn procession on horseback, attended by all his clergy. The Czar on foot held his horse's bridle, and the people in the streets fell prostrate upon their faces before him, as the Tartars before their grand Lama. Confession was in use amongst them, but only in case of the greatest crimes; and then absolution was held necessary, but not repentance. They looked upon themselves as pure before God, as soon as they had received the benediction of their papas. Thus they passed without remorse from confession to theft and murder; and what lays a restraint upon other Christians was with them an encouragement

to wickedness. They made a scruple of drinking milk upon a fast-day; but masters of families, priests, married women, and maids, would not fail to intoxicate themselves with brandy upon a festival. They had religious disputes however among them as in other countries, but their greatest controversy was whether laymen should make the sign of the cross with two fingers or three; and one Jacob Nursoff in the preceding reign had raised a sedition in Astracan upon the occasion of this dispute.

The Czar in his vast dominions had many other subjects, who were not Christians. The Tartars, who inhabit the western coasts of the Caspian sea, and the Palus Maëotis, were Mahometans. The Siberians, Ostiacks, and Samoides, who live near the Frozen Sea, were savages, some of them idolaters, and others without the least notion of a God; and yet the Swedes, who were sent prisoners amongst them, were better pleased with their manners, than with those of the ancient Moscovites.

Peter Alexiowitz had received an education, that even tended to encrease the barbarity, which then prevailed in that part of the world.

His happy disposition inclined him to caress strangers, before he knew whether he should ever be the better for them. A young gentleman named le Fort, of an ancient family in Geneva, and whose father was a druggist, was the first person whose instrumentality the Czar afterwards employed to change the face of affairs in Moscovy. This young man was sent by his father in the station of a factor to Copenhagen, where he soon quitted his commerce; to attend a Danish ambassador to Moscow, being tempted to such an extravagant expedition by a dissatisfaction of mind, which is always inseparable from those, who fancy themselves above the employment they are bred to. His curiosity prompted him to learn the Russian language, in which he soon made such a surprizing progress, as caused him to be taken notice of, even by the Czar himself, who was then in his youth.

He insinuated himself into a familiarity with that monarch, and soon engaged himself in his service. In his conversation with the emperor he frequently expatiated on the advantages of trade and navigation. He told him

how Holland, which was not the hundredth part of the dominions of Moscovy, by trade only made as considerable a figure in Europe as Spain itself, to which it had formerly been a little useless and despised province. He discoursed to him of the refined policy of the princes of Europe, the discipline of their troops, the government of their towns, the infinite number of manufactures, arts, and sciences, which make the Europeans powerful and happy. This discourse awakened the young emperor, as it were, from a profound lethargy. His mighty genius, which a barbarous education had checked, but could not destroy, broke out almost all of a sudden. He resolved to act the man, to govern men, and to form a new nation. Several princes before him had renounced their thrones out of dislike to the fatigues of public business: but no one ever put off his royalty that he might learn to reign the better, like Peter the Great. He left Moscovy in 1698, before he had reigned two years, and took a journey into Holland disguised under a vulgar name, as a domestic servant of the said Mr. le Fort, whom he appointed his ambassador extraordinary to the States General. When he came to Amsterdam, he entered himself in the roll of ship-carpenters of the admiralty of the Indies, under the name of Peter Micaelof, and wrought upon the stocks like the common workmen. In his leisure hours he learnt those parts of mathematics as might be useful to a prince, such for instance as related to fortification, navigation, and the art of drawing plans. He went into the workmens shops, examined all their manufactures, and let nothing escape his observation. From thence he passed into England, where he perfected himself in the art of building ships, and returning into Holland, he carefully observed whatever might turn to the advantage of his country. At length after two years of travel and labour, which no one but himself would have submitted to, he appeared again in Moscovy, with all the arts of Europe in his train. Artists of all kinds followed in abundance; and then were first seen large Moscovite vessels upon the Black Sea, in the Baltic and the Ocean. Buildings of a regular and noble architecture rose in the midst of the Russian huts. He founded colleges, academies, printing-houses, and libra-



rics. Forms of government were introduced into the great towns; their habits and customs were changed by little and little, though not without difficulty; and the Moscovites learnt by degrees what society was. Their very superstitions were abolished, the dignity of the patriarch suppressed, and the Czar declared head of the church, which last attempt, though it would have cost a less absolute prince his throne and his life, yet succeeded in him almost without opposition, and secured to him the success of all his other innovations.

At the same time he gave rise to commerce in his dominions. His views enlarging in proportion as he changed the face of his country, he had no sooner established trade, than he undertook to make Moscovy one day the center of the commerce of Asia and Europe. The Wolga, Tanais, and Duna, were to be united by canals, of which he himself drew the plan. Thus he proposed to open new ways from the Baltic to the Euxine and Caspian Seas, and from those two seas to the Northern Ocean. Nor was it enough to change the face of nature in his dominions; the manners of his subjects were to be changed too, which was by far the more difficult task; and above all, he wanted troops well-disciplined and inured to war. It is true, he had given some blows to the Ottoman power; but then he had only beaten Tartars, who were as ill-disciplined as his own soldiers. To the character of founder and legislator of his empire, (and more happy and greater perhaps he would have been, had he been content with those two titles) he longed to join that of conqueror. Ingria, which lies on the north-east of Livonia, had formerly belonged to the Czars; but from the time that Gustavus Adolphus had conquered those two provinces, the Swede had been in the quiet possession of them both. The Czar was impatient to revive those rights, which had been given up by his ancestors. Besides, he wanted a port on the east-side of the Baltic sea for the execution of his great designs. He therefore concluded a league with the king of Poland, to take away from the Swede whatever he possessed in those countries, which lye between the gulph of Finland, the Baltic sea, Poland, and Moscovy.

These then were the enemies, which were preparing all together to attack the infancy of Charles XII.

The confused whispers of these preparations alarmed the king's council, and they deliberated upon them in his presence; and as some of them were proposing to divert the storm by negotiations, Charles rising from his seat with an air of gravity and resolution, "Gentlemen, says he, I am resolved never to enter upon an unjust war, nor put an end to a just one but by the destruction of my enemies. My resolution is fixed. I will attack the first who shall declare against me, and when I have conquered him, I may hope to strike a terror into the rest." These words astonished all the old counsellors, they looked upon one another without daring to reply, and at last, ashamed to hope less than their king, they received his orders for the war with admiration.

They were still more surprized, when they saw him of a sudden renounce all the most innocent amusements of youth. From the moment he prepared for war, he entered upon a new course of life, from which he never after departed even for a moment. Full of the idea of Alexander and Caesar, he proposed to imitate those two conquerors in every thing but their vices. He no more indulged himself in magnificence, sports, and recreations; he reduced his table to the utmost frugality. He had been fond of gaiety and dress, but was ever after clad like a common soldier. It was thought he had entertained a passion for a lady of his court; but whether the suspicion was just or no, 'tis certain he renounced all conversation with that sex for ever after; not only out of apprehension of being enslaved to them, but to give the soldiers an example of his resolution to restrain himself to the severest discipline, or it may be through the vanity of being the sole prince who knew how to suppress an inclination so difficult to be conquered. He determined also to abstain from wine all the rest of his life; not, as has been pretended, to punish himself for an excess, which, as they say, led him into some irregularities unworthy of himself. Nothing is more absolutely false than this vulgar report; he never suffered wine to get the mastery over his reason, but it overheated his constitution, which

was warm enough already; he soon after left off beer too, and confined himself to pure water. Besides, temperance was a virtue till then unknown in the North, and he was desirous of being a model to the Swedes in every particular.

He began with assuring his brother-in-law, the duke of Holstein, of assistance. Eight thousand men were immediately sent into Pomerania, a province not far from Holstein, to strengthen the duke against the attacks of the Danes. And the duke indeed had need of them. His dominions were already ravaged, the castle of Gottorp taken, and the town of Tonningen pressed by a close siege, to which the king of Denmark was come in person, to enjoy a conquest he thought secure. This small spark began to enflame the empire. On one side the Saxon troops of the king of Poland, those of Brandenburg, Wolfenbuttle, and Hesse-Cassel marched to join the Danes. On the other, the king of Sweden's eight thousand men, the troops of Hanover and Zell, and three Dutch regiments, marched to assist the duke. Whilst the little country of Holstein was thus made the theatre of the war, two squadrons, the one from England, and the other from Holland, appeared in the Baltick. These two estates were guarantees of the treaty of Altena, which the Danes had broken: they were eager to relieve the oppressed duke, because the interest of their trade was incompatible with the growing power of the king of Denmark. They knew the Dane, if he was once master of the passage of the Sound, would be tempted to impose hard laws on the trading nations, should he ever be strong enough to do it with impunity. And this reason has long engaged the English and Dutch, as much as possible, to hold the balance even between the princes of the North. They joined themselves to the young king of Sweden, who seemed ready to be crushed by so many enemies, united together against him, and succoured him for the same reason the others fell upon him, because they thought him incapable of defending himself. In the mean time Charles set out for his first campaign on the 8th of May new style in the year 1700. He left Stockholm, and never after returned thither. An immense body of

people attended him as far as Carelscroon, offering up their prayers for him, and bursting into tears of admiration. Before he left Sweden, he established at Stockholm a council of defence, made up of several senators. Their commission was to take care of all that regarded the fleet, the troops, and fortifications of the country. The body of the senate was to regulate every thing besides provisionally within the kingdom. Having thus settled order and regularity in his dominions, his mind, now free from every other care, was bent wholly upon the war. His fleet consisted of three and forty vessels; that which carried him, named the king Charles, and the biggest they had ever seen, was a ship of an hundred and twenty guns; Count Piper his first minister, general Renschild, and the Count de Guiscard, ambassador of France in Sweden, embarked with him. He joined the squadrons of the allies. The Danish fleet declined the engagement, and gave the three united fleets the opportunity of drawing so near Copenhagen, as to throw some bombs into the town.

The king then, as in a sudden transport, taking Count Piper and general Renschild by the hands, "And what, says he, if we should lay hold of the opportunity of making a descent, and besiege Copenhagen by land, whilst it is blocked up by sea!" Renschild answered, "Sir, the great Gustavus after fifteen years experience would not have made any other proposition." Orders were immediately given for five thousand men to embark, who lay upon the coast of Sweden, and were joined to the troops they had on board. The king quitted his great vessel, and entered into a lighter frigate; and then they dispatched three hundred grenadiers in small shallops towards the shore. Among these shallops were small flat-bottomed boats, which carried the fascines, the Chevaux de Frize, and the instruments of the pioneers. Five hundred select men followed after in other shallops. Then came the king's men of war, with two English frigats and two Dutch, which were to favour the descent with their cannon.

Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, is situate in the isle of Zealand, in the midst of a beautiful plain, which has the Sound on the North west, and the Baltick on the



craft, where the king of Sweden then lay. Upon the unexpected movement of the vessels, which threatened a descent, the inhabitants in a consternation at the inactivity of their own fleet, and the motion of the Swedish ships, looked round with terror to see in what place the storm would fall. The fleet of Charles stopped over-against Humblebeck within seven miles of Copenhagen. Immediately the Danes drew up their horse to that place. The foot were posted behind thick entrenchments, and what artillery they could get thither was directed against the Swedes.

The king then quitted his frigate, to throw himself into the first shallop, at the head of his guards. The ambassador of France was constantly at his side; "Sir, says the king to him in Latin, (for he would never speak French) "you have no difference with the Danes, you shall go no farther if you please." "Sir," answered the count de Guiscard in French, "the king my master has ordered me to attend your majesty; I flatter myself you will not this day drive me from your court, which never before appeared so splendid." As he spoke these words, he gave his hands to the king, who leapt into the shallop, whither count Piper and the ambassador followed him. They advanced under cover of the cannon of the vessels, which favoured the descent. The small boats were but about a hundred yards off the shore; Charles, impatient to land, threw himself from the shallop into the sea, with his sword in his hand, and the water above his middle. His ministers, the ambassadors of France, the officers and soldiers immediately followed his example, and marched ashore, amidst a shower of musket-shot, which the Danes discharged. The king, who had never in his life before heard a discharge of muskets loaden with ball, asked major Stuart, who stood next him, "What whistling that was which he had in his ears?" "'Tis the noise of the musket-ball which they fire upon you," says the major. "That's right, says the king, henceforward it shall be my music." And that moment the major, who explained the noise to him, received a shot in his shoulder; and a lieutenant on the other side of him fell dead at his feet. It is usual for troops

that are attacked in their entrenchments to be beaten, because the assailants have generally an impetuosity which the defenders cannot have; besides, to wait for the enemy in one's lines, is generally a confession of one's own weakness, and the other's advantage. The Danish horse and foot took to their heels after a faint resistance. As soon as the king was master of their entrenchments, he fell upon his knees to thank God for the first success of his arms. He immediately caused redoubts to be raised towards the town, and himself marked out the encampment. At the same time he sent back his vessels to Schonen, a part of Sweden not far from Copenhagen, for fresh recruits of nine thousand men. Every thing conspired to assist the vivacity of Charles. The nine thousand men were upon the shore ready to embark, and the next morning a favourable wind brought them to him.

All this passed within sight of the Danish fleet who durst not venture to interpose. Copenhagen in a fright sent deputies immediately to the king to entreat him not to bombard the town. He received them on horseback at the head of his regiment of guards, and the deputies fell upon their knees before him. He demanded of the town four hundred thousand rix-dollars, with orders to supply his camp with all sorts of provisions, which he promised they should be honestly paid for. They brought him the provisions, because they durst not refuse them, but were in no expectation that the conquerors would vouchsafe to pay for them; and those who brought them were astonished to find that they were paid generously and without delay by the meanest soldiers in the army. There had long reigned in the Swedish troops a strict discipline, which contributed not a little to their conquest; and the young king made it still more severe. There was not a soldier who dared to refuse payment for whatever he bought, much less go a maroding, or even stir out of the camp. He would not so much as allow his troops after a victory the privilege of stripping the dead, till they had his permission, and easily brought them to the observance of this order. Prayers were constantly said in his camp twice a day, at seven in the morning, and four in the afternoon; and he never failed to be present at

them himself, to give his soldiers an example of piety, as well as valour. His camp, which was far better regulated than Copenhagen, had every thing in abundance; and the country people chose rather to sell their provisions to their enemies the Swedes, than to their own countrymen, who did not pay so well for them. And the citizens were more than once obliged to fetch those provisions from the king of Sweden's camp, which they wanted in their markets.

The king of Denmark was then in Holstein, whither he seemed to have marched only to raise the siege of Tönningen. He saw the Baltick covered with his enemy's ships, a young conqueror already master of Zealand, and ready to take possession of the capital. He published a declaration, that whoever would take up arms against the Swedes should have their liberty. This declaration was of great weight in a country, where all the peasants, and even many of the townsmen were slaves. But Charles XII. was in no fear of an army of slaves. He let the king of Denmark know, that he made war for no other reason but to oblige him to make peace; and that he must either resolve to do justice to the duke of Holstein, or see Copenhagen destroyed, and his kingdom put to fire and sword. The Dane was too fortunate to have to do with a conqueror, who valued himself upon his justice. A congress was appointed to meet in the town of Travendal, on the frontiers of Holstein. The king of Sweden would not suffer the artifice of the ministers to protract the negotiations into any length; he would have the treaty finished with as much rapidity as he made his descent into Zealand. And it was effectually concluded on the 5th of August, to the advantage of the duke of Holstein, who was indemnified from all the expences of the war, and delivered from oppression. The king of Sweden would accept of nothing for himself, being satisfied with having relieved his ally, and humbled his enemy. Thus Charles XII. at eighteen years of age began and ended this war in less than six weeks.

Precisely at the same time the king of Poland laid siege in person to the town of Riga, the capital of Livonia; and the Czar was upon his march on the east at the head of

an hundred thousand men. Riga was defended by the old count d' Alberg, a Swedish general, who at the age of fourscore joined all the fire of youth to the experience of sixty campaigns. Count Flemming, since minister of Poland, a great man both in the field and at the council-board, and Mr. Patkul, carried on the siege under the king's direction; the one with all the activity proper to his character, and the other with the utmost obstinacy of revenge. But notwithstanding several advantages which the besiegers had gained, the experience of the old count d' Albert rendered all their efforts fruitless, and the king of Poland despaired of gaining the town. He at last laid hold of an honourable opportunity of raising the siege. Riga was full of merchants goods, belonging to the Dutch. The States-general ordered their ambassador attending upon king Augustus, to make proper representations of it to him. The king of Poland did not stand in need of much intreaty. He consented to raise the siege, rather than occasion the least damage to his allies: who were not mightily surprized at this excess of complaisance, as they knew the real cause of it.

No more then remained for Charles XII. to do for finishing his first campaign, than to march against his rival in glory, Peter Alexiowitz. He was the more enraged against him, as there were still three Moscovite ambassadors at Stockholm, who had lately sworn to renew an inviolable peace. He, who valued himself upon a severe probity, could not comprehend how a legislator like the Czar could make a jest of what ought to be held so sacred. The young prince full of honour did not so much as dream, that there could be a different morality for princes and private persons. The emperor of Moscovy published a manifesto, which he had much better have suppressed. He alleged for a reason of the war, that they had not paid him sufficient honours, when he passed *incognito* to Riga: and that they sold provisions too dear to his ambassadors. These were the injuries, for which he ravaged Ingria with a hundred thousand men.

He appeared before Narva at the head of this great army on the first of October, in a season more severe in that climate than the month of January is at Paris. The Czar,



who in such weather would sometimes ride post four hundred leagues to see a mine or a canal, spared his troops no more than he spared himself. Besides, he knew that the Swedes ever since the time of Gustavus Adolphus would make war in the depth of winter as well as in summer, and he wanted to accustom the Moscovites also to lose all distinction of seasons, and to make them one day at least equal to the Swedes. Thus at a time when the frosts and snows oblige other nations in temperate climates to a suspension of arms, the Czar Peter laid siege to Narva within thirty degrees of the pole, and Charles XII. was upon his march to relieve it.

The Czar was no sooner arrived before the place, than he made haste to put in practice what he had lately learnt abroad in his travels. He marked out his camp, fortified it on all sides, raised redoubts at certain distances, and opened the trench himself. He had given the command of his army to the duke de Croy a German, and an able general, but at that time very little assisted by the Moscovite officers. For himself, he had only the rank of a private lieutenant in his own troops. He judged it necessary to give his nobility an example of military obedience, who till then had been undisciplinable, and accustomed to march at the head of ill armed slaves without any experience or order. He had a mind to teach them, that places in the army were to be obtained by services; he began himself with beating a drum, and was raised to an officer by degrees. It is by no means to be wondred at, that he, who at Amsterdam turned carpenter to procure himself fleets should become a lieutenant at Narva to teach his nation the art of war.

The Moscovites are strong and indefatigable, and, it may be, as courageous as the Swedes; but it requires time to form experienced troops, and discipline to make them invincible. The only good soldiers in the army were thirty thousand Streletses, who were in Moscovy what the Janisaries are in Turkey. The rest were Barbarians forced from their forests, and covered over with the skins of wild beasts, some armed with arrows, and others with clubs; few of them had fuses, nor had any one of them seen a regular siege; there was not one good cannoneer in the

whole army. An hundred and fifty cannon, which one would have thought must have soon laid the little town of Narva in ashes, were scarce able to make a breach, where the artillery of the town destroyed every moment whole ranks in the trenches. Narva was almost without fortifications, and count Horn, who commanded there, had not a thousand regular troops; and yet this immense army was not able to reduce it in ten weeks.

On the 15th of November the Czar had information that the king of Sweden having crossed the sea with two hundred transports, was upon his march to relieve Narva. The Swedes were no more than twenty thousand, but the Czar had no advantage except superiority of number. Far therefore from despising his enemy, he employed all the art he had to crush him; and not content with an hundred thousand men, he was getting ready another army to oppose him, and check his progress. He had already given orders for near forty thousand recruits, who were coming up from Plescow with great expedition. He went in person to hasten their march, that he might hem in the king between the two armies. Nor was this all; a detachment of thirty thousand men from the camp before Narva were posted at a league's distance from the town, directly in the king of Sweden's road. Twenty thousand Streletses were placed farther off upon the same road, and five thousand others made up an advanced guard; and he must necessarily force his way through the body of all these troops before he could reach the camp, which was fortified with a rampart and double Fosse. The king of Sweden had landed at Pernaw, in the gulph of Riga, with about sixteen thousand foot, and a few more than four thousand horse.

From Pernaw he made a flying march as far as Revel, followed by all his horse, and only four thousand of his foot. But he always marched before, without waiting for the rest of his troops; and soon found himself with his eight thousand men only, before the first posts of the enemy. He without hesitation attacked them one after another, without giving them time to learn with how small a number they had to engage. The Moscovites seeing the Swedes come upon them, made no doubt but

they had a whole army to encounter; and the advanced guard of five thousand men immediately fled upon their approach. The twenty thousand beyond them terrified with the flight of their countrymen, made no resistance; and carried their consternation and confusion among the thirty thousand, who were posted within a league of the camp; and the panick seizing upon them too, they retired to the main body of the army without striking a blow. These three posts were carried in two days and an half; and what upon other occasions would have been reckoned three victories did not retard the king's march the space of one hour. He appeared then at last with his eight thousand men, wearied with the fatigues of so long a march, before a camp of an hundred thousand Moscovites, with an hundred and fifty pieces of brass cannon in their front: and he scarce allowed them any time for rest, before he gave his orders for the attack without delay.

The signal was two fuses, and the word in German, *With the aid of God*. A general officer having represented to him the great hazard of the attempt, "What, says he, do you make any question whether I with my eight thousand brave Swedes shall not rout a hundred thousand Moscovites?" But upon recollection, fearing there was too much ostentation in what he said, he ran after the officer in a moment, "And are not you, says he, of the same opinion? Have not I a double advantage over the enemy; the one, that their horse can be of no service to them; and the other, that the place being strait, their great number will only incommode them; and thus in reality I shall be stronger than they;" The officer did not think fit to differ from him, and thus they marched against the Moscovites about noon on the 30th of November 1700.

As soon as the cannon of the Swedes had made a breach in the entrenchments, they advanced with their bayonets at the end of their fuses; at the same time a violent storm of snow, which fell at their backs, was driven by the wind full in the face of the enemy. The Moscovites stood their fire for half an hour, without quitting their posts. The king attacked the Czar's quarter, which lay on the other side of the camp, and was in hopes of a rencounter,

as not knowing that the emperor was gone in quest of the forty thousand men, who were daily expected. Upon the first discharge of the enemies shot, the king received a ball in his left shoulder, but it grazed only in a slight manner upon the flesh; his activity even hindred him from perceiving that he was wounded. Presently after his horse was killed under him. A second had his head carried off by a cannon-ball. And as he was nimbly mounting a third, "These fellows, says he, make me exercise," and then he went on to engage and give orders with the same presence of mind as before. Within three hours the entrenchments were carried on all sides. The king pursued the right of the enemy as far as the river of Narva, with his left wing, if one might properly call by that name about four thousand men, who were in pursuit of near fifty thousand. The bridge broke under them as they fled, and the river was in a moment covered with the dead. The rest in despair returned to their camp, without knowing whither they went; and finding certain barracks, they took their posts behind them. There they defended themselves for a while, as not knowing how to make their escape. But at last their generals Dolhorouky, Gollouin, Fedorowity surrendered themselves to the king, and laid their arms at his majesty's feet. And in the instant they were offering them came up the duke of Croy the general of the army, to surrender himself with thirty officers.

Charles received all these prisoners of distinction with as easy a politeness, and as obliging an air, as if he had been to pay them the honours of an entertainment in his own court. He only detained the general officers, all the subalterns and common soldiers were disarmed and conducted to the river of Narva, where they were furnished with boats to carry them over, and return them back to their own homes. In the mean time night came on, and the left wing of the Moscovites still continued fighting. The Swedes had not lost fifteen hundred men; eighteen thousand Moscovites had been killed in their entrenchments; a great number was drowned; many had passed the river; but still there remained enough in the camp to exterminate the Swedes even to the last man. But it is not the number of the dead, but the terror of those who survive,



that gives the finishing stroke to victories. The king employed the small remains of the day in seizing upon the enemy's artillery. He posted himself to advantage between their camp and the town, and there slept some hours on the ground, wrapt up in his cloak, expecting to fall at day-break upon the left wing of the enemy, which was not yet entirely routed. But at two o'clock in the morning general Wade, who commanded that wing, having heard of the gracious reception the king had given to the other generals, and how he had sent home all the subaltern officers and soldiers, desired that he would grant him the same favour. The conqueror made answer, that he should have it if he would draw near at the head of his troops, and lay down his arms and colours at his feet. The general appeared soon after with his Moscovites, to the number of about thirty thousand. They marched soldiers and officers, with their heads uncovered, across less than seven thousand Swedes. The soldiers, as they passed before him, threw down their fuses and swords upon the ground, and the officers presented him with their ensigns and colours. He caused the whole multitude to cross the river, without retaining a single soldier prisoner. If he had put them under guard, the number of the prisoners would at least have been five times greater than that of the conquerors.

He then entered victorious into Narva, attended by the duke of Croy and the other general officers of the Moscovites. He ordered their swords to be restored to them, and being informed that they wanted money, and that the tradesmen of Narva refused to trust them, he sent the duke of Croy a thousand ducats, and every Moscovite officer five hundred, who could never sufficiently admire the civility of their treatment, of which they could not form to themselves the least idea. Immediately a relation of the victory was drawn up at Narva to be sent to Stockholm and the allies of Sweden, but the king cut off with his own hand whatever was reported too much to his own advantage, or to the detriment of the Czar. His modesty could not hinder their striking at Stockholm several medals to perpetuate the memory of these events. Among the rest they struck one, which represented him

on the one side standing on a pedestal, to which were chained a Moscovite, a Dane, and a Polander; and on the reverse an Hercules armed with his club, treading upon a Cerberus, with this inscription, *TRES UNO CONTUDIT ICTU.*

Among the prisoners taken at the battle of Narva there was one, who was a great instance of the revolutions of fortune. He was the eldest son and heir to the king of Georgia. They called him the Czarafis, a name which signifies prince, or son of Czar amongst all the Tartars, as well as in Moscovy. For the word Czar signified king among the ancient Scythians, from whom all these people are descended, and is by no means derived from the Cæsars of Rome, so long unknown to these Barbarians. His father Mitelleski Czar, who was master of the most beautiful part of the country situate between the mountains of Ararat and the eastern coasts of the Black Sea, had been driven from his kingdom by his own subjects in 1688, and chose rather to throw himself into the arms of the emperor of Moscovy, than apply to the Turks. This king's son, at nineteen years of age, attended upon Peter the Great in his expedition against the Swedes, and was taken fighting by some Finland soldiers, who had already stripped him, and were upon the point of killing him. Count Renschild rescued him from their hands, supplied him with clothes, and presented him to his master. Charles sent him to Stockholm, where the unfortunate prince died some few years after. Upon his taking leave, the king could not avoid making aloud in the hearing of his officers a natural reflection upon the strange fate of an Asiatick prince born at the foot of mount Caucasus, who was going to live a prisoner among the snows of Sweden. "It is, says he, as if I was to be one day a prisoner among the Crim Tartars." These words at that time made no impression, but were afterwards but too much thought on, when the event had confirmed the prediction.

The Czar was advancing by long marches with an army of forty thousand Russians, in expectation of surrounding his enemy on all sides. In the mid-way he had intelligence of the battle of Narva, and the dispersion of

his whole camp. He judged it not convenient with his forty thousand raw and undisciplined men, to engage with a conqueror, who had lately destroyed an hundred thousand intrenched in their camp. He returned back from whence he came, still pursuing his resolution of disciplining his troops, at the same time that he civilized his subjects. "I know, says he, the Swedes will beat us for some time, but in time they will teach us to beat them." Moscow, his capital, was in the utmost terror and desolation, at the news of this defeat. And so great was the pride and ignorance of the people, that they could not be persuaded but they had been conquered by more than human power, and that the Swedes had been victorious by the force of magic. This opinion was so general, that public prayers were ordered to be put up to St. Nicholas, the patron of Moscovy, upon the occasion. The form was too singular to be here omitted. It runs thus.

"O thou, who art our perpetual comforter in all our adversities, great St. Nicholas, infinitely powerful, by what sin have we offended thee in our sacrifices, genuflexions, bowings and thanksgivings, that thou hast thus forsaken us? We have implored thy assistance against these terrible, insolent, enraged, dreadful, insuperable destroyers, when like lions and bears, who have lost their young, they have fallen upon us, terrified, wounded, and slain by thousands, us who are thy people. As it is impossible this should have happened without diabolical influence and enchantment, we beseech thee, O great St. Nicholas, to be our champion and standard-bearer, to deliver us from this troop of forcerers, and drive them far off from our coasts, with the recompence that is due unto them."

Whilst the Moscovites were thus complaining of their defeat to St. Nicholas, Charles XII. returned thanks to God, and prepared himself for new victories.

*The End of the First Book.*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK II.

The CONTENTS.

*Charles beats the Saxons at the passage of the Duna; conquers Courland; is master in Lithuania; resolves to dethrone Augustus. A short account of the Polish government. A diet is called at Warsaw; one half of the nation declares against king Augustus. The embassy of the republick of Poland to Charles; the king of Poland sends privately to him the countess of Koningmarck; the battle of Crassau; the duke of Holstein is slain; the cardinal primate declares the throne of king Augustus vacant. Augustus seizes upon James Sobieski, who was intended to be elected in his stead, and shuts him up in prison at Leipsick with prince Constantine his brother.*

THE king of Poland with reason expected, that his enemy, already victorious over the Danes and the Moscovites, would come next to vent his fury on him. He entered into a league more strict than ever with the Czar, and the two princes agreed upon an interview, the better to contrive their measures. They met at Birslen, a small town in Lithuania, without any of those formalities, which serve only to retard business, and were neither agreeable to their situation nor their humour. They passed fifteen days together in the enjoyment of several ex-



travagant pleasures; for the Czar, amidst his cares for the reformation of his kingdom, could never correct in himself his dangerous inclination to debauchery.

Count Piper, the king of Sweden's principal minister, had the first information of the interview intended between the emperor of Moscovy and the king of Poland. He advised his master to oppose to their measures a little of that policy, which he had hitherto too much disregarded. Charles XII. listened to him, and for the first time gave consent to the practice of political intrigues so frequent in other courts. There was in the Swedish troops a young Scots gentleman, who was one of those who seasonably leave their country, where they are very poor, and are to be met with in all the armies of Europe. He spoke the German tongue extremely well, and could easily accommodate himself to every conjuncture. Him therefore they chose to be a spy upon the conferences of the two kings. He applied himself to the colonel of the regiment of Saxon horse, who were to serve as guards to the Czar during the interview. He passed for a gentleman of Brandenburg, and his address and a proper distribution of money easily procured him a lieutenancy in the regiment. When he came to Birsen he artfully insinuated himself into the familiarity of the secretaries of the ministers, and was made a party in all their pleasures; and whether it was that he took the advantage of their indiscretion in a debauch of wine, or that he gained them by presents, he certainly drew from them all the secrets of their masters, and gave immediate notice of them to Charles XII.

The king of Poland had engaged to furnish the Czar with fifty thousand German troops, to be hired of several princes, and which the Czar was to pay for. And he on the other hand was to send fifty thousand Moscovites into Poland, to be trained up to war, and promised to pay king Augustus three millions of \* rixdollars within the space of two years. This treaty, if it had been executed, might have proved fatal to the king of Sweden. It was a ready and certain way to make the Moscovites

\* A rixdollar is worth about as much as a French crown or three livres.

good soldiers; and perhaps it was forging chains for one part of Europe.

Charles XII. used his utmost endeavours to prevent the king of Poland from reaping the benefit of this treaty. After he had passed the winter at Narva, he appeared in Livonia near that very town of Riga, which king Augustus had so unsuccessfully besieged. The Saxon troops were posted along the river Duna, which is very broad in that place, and Charles, who lay on the other side of the river, was to dispute the passage. The Saxons were not commanded by their prince, who was then sick, but were headed by Mareschal Stenau and prince Ferdinand duke of Courland who commanded under him. The king of Sweden had alone formed the plan of the passage, he was about to attempt. He caused great boats to be made after a new manner, whose sides were far higher than ordinary and could be raised or let down, like a draw-bridge. When raised they covered the troops they carried; and when let down, they served as a bridge to land them. He made use likewise of another stratagem. Having observed that the wind blew directly from the north; where he lay to the south, where his enemies were encamped, he set fire to a large heap of wet straw, which diffusing a thick smoke over the river, hindered the Saxons from seeing his troops, or judging what he was about to do. By means of this cloud he sent out barks laden with more of the same smoking straw, so that the cloud increasing, and being driven by the wind directly in the face of his enemies, it made it impossible for them to know whether he was upon his passage or not. He alone conducted the execution of his scheme, and being got into the midst of the river, "Well, says he to general Renschild, the Duna will be as good to us as the sea of Copenhagen; take my word for it, general, we shall beat them." He got to the other side in a quarter of an hour, and was vexed to find that three people had leapt ashore before him. He immediately landed his cannon, and drew up his troops before the enemy, who were quite blinded with smoke, and could not make any opposition but by a few random-shot. And the wind hav-

ing dispersed the mist, the Saxons saw the king of Sweden already upon his march against them.

Mareschal Stenau lost not a moment, but at the first appearance of the Swedes fell furiously upon them with the flower of his horse. The violent shock of that troop falling upon the Swedes in the instant they were forming their battalions, threw them into disorder. They gave way, were broken, and pursued even into the river. The king of Sweden rallied them in a moment in the midst of the water, with as much ease, as if he had been making a review. The soldiers then, marched more compact than before, beat back Mareschal Stenau and advanced into the plain. Stenau finding his troops in a consternation, made them retire very dexterously into a dry place, flanked with a morass, and a wood where his artillery lay. The advantage of the ground, and the time he had given the Saxons to recover from their first surprize, restored them to their courage. Charles immediately fell upon them, having with him fifteen thousand men, and Stenau and the duke of Courland about twelve thousand. The battle was sharp and bloody; the duke had two horses killed under him, and thrice penetrated into the midst of the king's guard; but being at last beat off his horse with a blow from a musquet, his army fell into confusion, and disputed the victory no longer. His cuirassiers carried him off with difficulty, greatly bruised and half dead, from the thickest of the fight, and from under the horses heels, which trampled on him.

The king of Sweden, after this victory, marched immediately to Mittau, the capitol of Courland, and took it. All the towns of the Dutchy surrendered to him at discretion; it was rather a journey than a conquest. He passed without delay into Lithuania, and conquered wherever he came. And he found a pleasing satisfaction, as he owned himself, when he entered the town of Birsen in triumph, where the king of Poland and the Czar had plotted his destruction but a few months before.

It was in this place that he laid the design of dethroning the king of Poland by the hands of the Poles themselves. As he was one day at table, wholly taken up

with the thoughts of this enterprize, and observing his usual sobriety, in a profound silence, appearing, as it were, buried in the greatness of his conceptions; a German colonel, who waited upon him, said loud enough to be heard, that the meals which the Czar and the king of Poland had made in the same place were something different from those of his majesty. "Yes," says the king rising, "and I shall the more easily spoil their digestion." In short, intermixing at that time a little policy with the force of his arms, he made no delay to prepare for the event he was meditating to accomplish.

Poland is the most exact image of the old Gothic government, which has been corrected or altered every where else. 'Tis the sole state which has preserved the name of Republic in conjunction with the royal dignity. The nobility and clergy maintain their liberty against the king, and take it from the rest of the nation. The body of the people are slaves; such is the fate of mankind, that the greatest number, in one sort or other, is always enslaved by the smaller. There the peasant sows not for himself, but for his lord, to whom he and his land, as well as his manual labours belong, and who can sell him or cut his throat with the same impunity as he can kill the beasts of the field. Every gentleman is independent. Judgment cannot be given against him in a criminal cause, unless by an assembly of the whole nation; nor can his person be seized, till after he is condemned: and thus he is seldom or never punished. Abundance of them are poor, and in this case they let themselves out to the more wealthy, receive a salary from them, and discharge the meanest offices, chusing rather to serve their equals, than enrich themselves by trade. The slavery of the generality of the nation, and the pride and idleness of the rest, deprive the country of all the improvements of art, though 'tis otherwise fertile, and watered with the finest rivers in Europe; insomuch that it would be very easie to open a communication by canals between the northern Ocean and the Black Sea, and to take in the commerce of Europe and Asia. The few artificers and tradesmen who are to be met with in Poland are foreigners, Scots, French and Jews, who buy the pro-

visions of the country at a cheap rate, and sell them dear to the nobility for the indulgence of their luxury.

Whoever should see a king of Poland in the pomp of royal majesty, would be apt to think him the most absolute prince in Europe, and yet he is certainly the least so. The Poles make really with him the same contract, which in other nations is supposed to subsist between the king and his subjects. The king of Poland, even at his consecration and in swearing to observe the *pacta conventa*, discharges his subjects from their oath of allegiance, in case he should break the laws of the republic.

He nominates to all places of trust, and confers all honours. Nothing is hereditary in Poland but estates in land, and nobility. The sons of a Palatin, or of a king, have no claim to the dignity of their father. But there is this great difference between the king and the republic, that he can take away no office of power after having conferred it; and the republic has a right to deprive him of the crown, if he should transgress the laws of the state.

The nobility jealous of their liberty often sell their votes, and seldom their affections. They scarce have elected a king, before they fear his ambition, and cabal against him. The great men he has raised, and whom he cannot pull down, very often become his enemies, instead of remaining his creatures; and those who are attached to the court are hated by the rest of the nobility. This constantly forms two parties among them; a division inevitable, and even necessary, in countries where they will have kings, and at the same time preserve their liberty.

What concerns the nation is regulated in the States General, which they call Dietes. These estates are made up of the body of the senate and several gentlemen. The senators are the Palatines and the bishops; the second order is composed of the deputies of the particular dietes in each Palatinate. The president in these great assemblies is the archbishop of Gnesna, Primate of Poland, Vice-roy of the kingdom in the Interregnum, and the first person of the state after the king. There is seldom in Poland any other cardinal but himself; because the



Roman purple giving no precedence in the senate, a bishop who should be made a cardinal, would be obliged either to sit in his rank of senator, or to renounce the solid rights of the dignity he has in his country, to support the pretensions of a foreign honour.

These dietes by the laws of the kingdom are to be held alternately in Poland and Lithuania. The deputies often decide their affairs there with their sabres in their hands, like the old Sarmatae, from whom they are descended, and sometimes too disguised with drunkenness, a vice unknown to the Sarmatae. Every gentleman deputed to the states general enjoys the right the tribunes of the people had at Rome, of opposing themselves to the laws of the senate. One single gentleman, who says, *I protest*, by that sole word puts a stop to the unanimous resolutions of all the rest; and if he quits the place where the diete is held, they are obliged to break up.

For the disorders arising from this law they provide a remedy still more dangerous. Poland is seldom without two factions. Unanimity in the diete being therefore impossible, each party forms confederacies, in which they decide by plurality of voices, without any regard to the protestations of the lesser number. These assemblies, uncountenanced by law, but authorized by custom, are made in the king's name, though often against his consent and interest; almost in the same manner as the league in France made use of Henry the third's name to ruin him; and as the parliament in England, who brought Charles the I. to the scaffold, began by setting his majesty's name at the head of all the resolutions they took to destroy him. When the troubles are ended, it then belongs to the general diete to confirm or disannul the acts of these confederacies. One diete can also disannul whatever has been done by another, that has gone before it, for the same reason that in absolute monarchies a king can abolish the laws of his predecessors, or even those he formerly made himself.

The nobility, who make the laws of the Republic, likewise constitute its strength. They appear in arms upon great occasions, and can form a body of more than an hundred and fifty thousand men. This great army,

called Pospolite, moves with difficulty, and is ill governed; the scarcity of provisions and forage makes it impossible for them to subsist long together; they want discipline, subordination and experience; but the love of liberty, which animates them, makes them always formidable.

They may be conquered, or dispersed, or even held for a time in bondage, but they soon shake off the yoke; they compare themselves to reeds, which a storm will bend to the ground, and which will rise again as soon as it is calm. 'Tis for this reason they have no places of strength; they will be themselves the only bulwarks of the republic; they never suffer their king to build any fort, lest he should employ it less for their defence, than oppression. Their country is entirely open, except two or three frontier places. And if in any of their wars either among themselves or with foreigners, they resolve to sustain a siege, they are obliged to raise fortifications of earth in haste, to repair the old walls that are half ruined, and to enlarge the fosses that are half filled up, and the town is taken before the entrenchments are finished.

The Pospolite is not always on horseback to guard the country, they mount only by order of the dietes, or sometimes by the single order of the king in extremity of danger.

The usual guard of Poland is an army which ought always to subsist at the expence of the republic. It is made up of two bodies independent of each other; under two different grand generals. The first body is that of Poland, and should consist of six and thirty thousand men; the second to the number of twelve thousand is that of Lithuania. The two grand generals are independent of each other; and though they be nominated by the king, they never give an account of their actions to any but the republic, and have a supreme authority over their troops. The colonels are absolute masters of their regiments, and it belongs to them to procure them sustenance as they can, and pay them. But as they are seldom paid themselves, they lay waste the country; and ruin the husbandmen to satisfy their own avidity, and that of their soldiers. The Polish lords appear in these armies with more magnificence than in their towns, and their

tents are better furnished than their houses. The horse which makes up two thirds of the army is almost all composed of gentlemen, and is remarkable for the gracefulness of the riders, the beauty of the horses, and the richness of the accoutrements and harness.

Their Gens d'Armes especially, which they distinguish into Houffarts and Pancernes, march always attended by several valets, who lead their horses, whose bridles are ornamented with plates of silver and nails of the same metal, embroidered saddles, saddle-bows and stirrups gilt, and sometimes made of massy silver, with large housings trailing after the Turkish manner, whose magnificence the Poles strive to imitate as much as they can.

But how gorgeous soever the cavalry may appear, the foot are as wretched and ragged, ill-clothed and ill-armed, without proper furniture or any thing uniform, at least this was their condition till the year 1710. and yet these foot, who resemble the vagabond Tartars, support hunger and cold, fatigues and all the weight of war, with incredible resolution.

One may still observe in the Polish soldiers the character of the antient Sarmatae their ancestors, as little discipline, the same fury in the assault, the same readiness to run away and return to the battle, and the same cruel disposition to slaughter, when they are conquerors.

The king of Poland at first flattered himself that in his necessity, these two armies would fight for him, that the Polish Pospolite would arm at his orders, and that all these forces joined to the Saxons his subjects and the Moscovites his allies, would make up a body, before which the small number of the Swedes would not venture to appear. But he saw himself almost on a sudden deprived of these succours by the very care that he had taken to have them all together.

Accustomed in his hereditary dominions to absolute power, he too readily supposed he could govern in Poland as in Saxony. The beginning of his reign raised malecontents; his first proceedings provoked the party who had opposed his election, and almost alienated all the rest. The Poles murmured to see their towns filled with Saxon garrisons and their frontiers with Moscovite

troops. This nation, far more jealous of maintaining their own liberty than solicitous to disturb their neighbours, did not look upon king Augustus's war with Sweden, and the invasion of Livonia, as an enterprize advantageous to the republic. 'Tis not an easy matter to hinder a free nation from discerning their true interests. The Poles were of opinion that if this war, undertaken without their consent, should prove unsuccessful, their country, lying open on all sides, would become a prey to the king of Sweden; and if it should succeed, they should be subdued by their own king; who, being then master of Livonia as well as Saxony, would enslave Poland, as it lyes between those two countries, which are filled with fortified places. In this alternative, either of becoming slaves to the king whom they had elected, or of being ravaged by Charles XII. who was justly incensed, they only raised a clamour against the war, which they judged to be rather declared against themselves, than against Sweden; and they looked upon the Saxons and Moscovites as the instruments of their chains. Upon the king of Sweden's defeating all that had opposed his passage, and advancing with a victorious army into the heart of Lithuania, they loudly exclaimed against their sovereign, and with the more freedom, because he was unfortunate.

Lithuania was then divided into two parties, that of the princes of Sapieha, and that of Oginsky. These two factions had begun from private quarrels, and degenerated into a civil war. The king of Sweden drew over to his interest the princes Sapieha; and Oginsky, being but badly assisted by the Saxons, found his party almost extinguished. The Lithuanian army whom these troubles and want of money had reduced to a small number, was in part dispersed by the conqueror. The few who held out for the king of Poland were separated into small bodies of wandering troops, which over-ran the country and subsisted by spoil. So that Augustus beheld nothing in Lithuania, but the weakness of his own party, the hatred of his subjects, and the army of the enemy conducted by a young prince, incensed, victorious and implacable.

There was indeed an army in Poland, but instead of six and thirty thousand men, the number prescribed by

the laws, it hardly consisted of eighteen thousand. And it was not only ill paid and ill armed, but the generals were undetermined what course they should take.

The king's best refuge was to order the nobility to follow him, but he durst not expose himself to a refusal, which would have too much discovered his weakness, and consequently increased it.

In this state of trouble and uncertainty all the Palatines of the kingdom demanded a diet of the king; in like manner as in England in times of difficulty all the bodies of the state present addresses to the king to desire him to call a parliament. Augustus stood more in need of an army than a diet, where the actions of kings are examined. He was obliged however to call one, that he might not exasperate the nation beyond a possibility of reconciliation. A diet therefore was appointed to meet at Warsaw on the second of December 1701. And he soon perceived that Charles XII. had at least as much power in that assembly as himself. Those who held for the Sapieha, the Lubermirsky, and their friends, the Palatine Lecfinsky treasurer of the crown, and above all the partizans of the princes Sobieski, were all secretly attached to the king of Sweden.

The most considerable of them, and the most dangerous enemy the king of Poland had, was cardinal Radjousky, archbishop of Gnesna, primate of the kingdom, and president of the diet. He was a man full of artifice and reserve in his conduct; entirely governed by an ambitious woman, whom the Swedes called Madame la Cardinale, who never ceased to push him on to intrigue and faction. The primate's talent lay chiefly in making his advantage of the conjunctures which fell in his way, without endeavouring to give rise to them. He would appear unresolved when he was most absolutely determined in his projects, seeking always to gain his ends by ways which seemed most apposite to them. King John Sobieski, the predecessor of Augustus, had formerly made him bishop of Wamerlandt, and vice-chancellor of the kingdom. And Radjousky, whilst a private bishop, obtained the Cardinal's hat by the favour of the same prince. This dignity soon opened him the way to the



primacy, and thus, uniting in his person whatever is apt to impose upon others, he was in a condition to attempt great things with impunity.

Upon the death of John, he used his utmost endeavours to place prince James Sobieski, upon the throne; but the universal hatred they bore to the father, as great a man as he was, set aside the son. The cardinal primate then joined with the abbe de Polignac, ambassador of France, to give the crown to the prince of Conti, who in reality was elected, but the money and troops of Saxony got the better of his eloquence. He at last offered himself to be drawn into the party, which crowned the elector of Saxony, and waited with impatience for an opportunity to sow division between the nation and the new king.

The victories of Charles XII. protector of prince James Sobieski, the civil war of Lithuania, the general disaffections of all mens minds to king Augustus, gave the cardinal hopes that the time was now come when he might be able to send back Augustus into Saxony, and open to the son of king John the way to the throne. This prince, before the innocent object of the Poles aversion, was now become their darling from the time that king Augustus grew out of favour; but he durst not indulge himself in the thoughts of so great a revolution; and yet the cardinal had insensibly laid the foundations of it.

He at first seemed desirous of reconciling the king with the republic: he sent circular letters, dictated in appearance by the spirit of concord and charity, usual and noted snares, but such as never fail to entrap: he wrote a pathetic letter to the king of Sweden, conjuring him in the name of him, whom all Christians equally adore, to give peace to Poland and her king. Charles XII. answered the cardinal's intentions more than his words. In the mean time he remained in the great dutchy of Lithuania with his victorious army, declaring that he would not disturb the diet; that he made war against Augustus and the Saxons, and not against Poland; and that far from designing any thing against the republic, he came to rescue it from oppression. These letters and these answers were for the public. The emissaries who went and came continually from the cardinal to count Piper, and the private

assemblies held at that prelate's house, were the springs that moved the diet. They proposed to send an embassy to Charles XII. and required with one consent of the king, that he should bring no more Moscovites upon their frontiers, and that he should send back the Saxon troops.

The bad fortune of Augustus had already done what the diet demanded of him. The league secretly concluded with the Moscovites at Birsken was become as insignificant, as at first it had appeared formidable. He was far from being able to send the Czar the fifty thousand Germans he had promised to raise in the empire. The Czar himself, a dangerous enemy to Poland, was at that time not very eager to assist with all his forces a divided kingdom, from whence he was in hopes of reaping some spoils. He contented himself with sending twenty thousand Moscovites into Lithuania, who did more mischief there than the Swedes, dying continually before the conqueror, and ravaging the lands of the Poles, 'till at last being pursued by the Swedish generals, and finding nothing more to pillage, they returned in shoals to their own country. As for the scattered remains of the Saxon army beaten at Riga, king Augustus sent them to winter and recruit in Saxony, that this sacrifice, however involuntary, might soften the rage of the incensed Poles.

The war was then changed into intrigues, and the diet divided into almost as many factions as there were palatines. One day the interests of king Augustus prevailed, and the next they were proscribed. Every individual cried out for liberty and justice, but not one knew what it was to be just or free. The time was spent in caballing in secret, and haranguing in public. The diet neither knew what they would, nor what they should, do. Great companies seldom agree upon proper counsels in times of civil broils, because the bold men in such assemblies are generally factious, and the men of probity timorous. The diet broke up in disorder on the 17th of February 1702, after three months of caballing and irresolution. The senators, who are the palatines and the bishops, remained at Warsaw. The senate of Poland has a right to make laws provisionally, which the diets seldom disannul. This body being not so numerous and used to business, was

far less tumultuous and came to a determination more quickly.

They agreed to send the embassy to the king of Sweden proposed in the diet, that the pospolite should mount their horses, and be ready upon all emergencies. They made several regulations to appease the troubles in Lithuania, and still more to diminish the king's authority, though they had less reason to be afraid of it, than that of Charles.

Augustus chose rather to receive hard laws from his conqueror than his subjects. He determined to ask peace of the king of Sweden, and would have concluded a private treaty with him. But he was obliged to conceal this step from the senate, whom he looked upon as an enemy still more untractable. As the affair was delicate, he entrusted it wholly to the countess of Koningsmarck, a Swedish lady of great birth, to whom he was then attached. This lady, who was so famous in the world for her wit and beauty, was more capable than any minister whatever to give success to a negotiation. Besides, as she had an estate in Charles the XIIth's dominions, and had lived long in his court, she had a plausible pretence for waiting upon him. She came then to the Swedish camp in Lithuania, and straight applied herself to count Piper, who too inadvertently promised her an audience of his master. The countess, among the perfections which rendered her one of the most amiable persons in Europe, had a singular talent of speaking the languages of several countries, which she had never seen, and with as much propriety as tho' she had been born in them. She would sometimes amuse herself with writing French verses, which might easily have been mistaken for the composition of a person brought up at Versailles. She made some for Charles XII. which ought not to be forgotten in history. She introduced the fabulous Gods, commending his different virtues; and the piece concluded thus,

*Enfin chacun des Dieux discourant a sa gloire,  
Le placoit par avance au temple de memoire :  
Mais Venus ni Bacchus n'en dirent pas un mot.*

*The Hero's acts while other Gods proclaim,  
And praise and promise him immortal fame;  
Silent sit Bacchus, and the Queen of love.*

All her wit and charms were lost upon such a man as the king of Sweden, and he constantly refused to see her. But as he frequently rode out to take the air, she resolved to speak to him upon the road. And accordingly meeting him one day in a narrow road, she alighted out of her coach, as soon as she saw him. The king made her a low bow, without speaking one word to her, turned the bridle of his horse, and rode back in an instant. So that the countess of Koningsmarck gained no other advantage from her journey, but the satisfaction of believing that the king of Sweden feared no body but her.

The king of Poland was therefore obliged to throw himself into the arms of the senate. He made them two proposals by the Palatine of Mariembourg, the one that they should leave to him the disposition of the army of the republic, whom he would pay two quarters advance out of his own revenue; and the other, that they should allow him to bring twelve thousand Saxons back into Poland. The cardinal primate gave an answer as severe; as the refusal of the king of Sweden. He told the Palatine of Mariembourg in the name of the assembly, " That " they were resolved to send an embassy to Charles XII. " that their business now was to reconcile the king with " Poland and Sweden; that it would be of no service to " pay an army, which would not fight for him, without " orders from the republic; and for the Saxons, he would " advise him to bring none into Poland."

The king in this extremity was desirous of preserving at least the appearance of the royal authority. He sent one of his chamberlains to Charles, to know of him, where and how his Swedish majesty would receive the embassy of the king his master and of the republic. They had unhappily neglected to demand a pass-port for his chamberlain to the Swedes. And the king of Sweden imprisoned him, instead of giving him audience, and said that he ex-

pected to receive an embassy from the republic, and not from king Augustus.

Charles then leaving garrisons behind him in some towns of Lithuania, advanced beyond Grodno, a place famous in Europe for the diets that are held there, but ill built and worse fortified.

At some miles from Grodno he met the embassy of the republic, which consisted of five senators. The Waiwode Galefky, and count Tarlo who since died in France, were appointed to deliver it. The king gave them audience in his tent, with a pomp which he had always disdained, but then thought necessary. A lieutenant general with an hundred drabans on horseback, who are the guards of the king of Sweden, went to meet the ambassadors; they lighted off their horses within fifty foot of the royal tent, and were conducted between two lines of guards under arms to a great antichamber. A major general introduced them from thence into a very large chamber, where the cieling, floors, and walls were all covered with Persian tapestry. The king received them upon a throne. He rose and took off his hat upon their first bowing, and then the king and the ambassadors being covered, the Waiwode spoke first, and count Tarlo after him. Their discourses were full of caution and obscurity; they did not once pronounce the name of the king of Poland, as they were determined neither to speak in his favour, nor openly to complain of him, but only left Charles to guess at what they thought not proper to explain. The king treated each ambassador in private with friendship and confidence. But when he came to give his answer to the republic which sent them, and which did not enter into his measures with a submission so ready as he expected, he told them by count Piper, that he would give an answer at Warsaw.

The same day he marched towards that town. This march was preceded by a manifesto, which the cardinal and his party spread over Poland in eight days. By this writing Charles invited all the Poles to join their revenge with his, and pretended to shew that their interest and his were the same. They were notwithstanding very different; but the manifesto supported by a great party, by the



disorder of the senate, and the approach of the conqueror, made very strong impressions. They were obliged to own Charles for their protector, since he was resolved to be so, and it was well for them, that he contented himself with that title.

The senators, who opposed Augustus, published this writing aloud even before his face, and the few who adhered to him kept silence. At last, when they heard that Charles was advancing by long marches, they all prepared in confusion to depart, the cardinal left Warsaw one of the first; and the major part followed hastily; some fled to their own country seats waiting to see how things would terminate, and others to arm their friends. There remained with the king only the ambassadors of the emperor and the Czar, the pope's nuncio, and some few bishops and Palatines, who were attached to his fortune. He was forced to fly, and nothing yet had been decided in his favour. Before his departure he hastened to hold a council with the small number of senators, who still represented the senate. But how zealous soever they were for his service, they were still Poles, and had all conceived so great an aversion to the Saxon troops, that they durst not allow him the liberty of bringing above six thousand men from thence for his defence; and they farther voted that these six thousand men should be commanded by the grand general of Poland, and immediately sent home after the conclusion of a peace. As to the armies of the republic, they left the disposition of them to him.

Upon this resolution of the council the king left Warsaw, being too weak to oppose the enemy, and little satisfied with the conduct of his own party. He straight published his orders for assembling the *pospolite*, and armies which were scarce any thing but a bare name. There was nothing to be hoped for out of Lithuania, where the Swedes were posted. And the army of Poland, reduced to a small number of troops, wanted arms, provisions, and good will. The greatest part of the nobility were intimidated, irresolute, or ill-disposed, and confined themselves to their own estates: their king in vain, though authorized by the laws of the state, gave orders under pain of death to every gentleman in the country to appear on horse-back, and

follow him. It was now become a dispute, whether they owed him obedience. His chief dependance was upon the troops of his electorate, where the form of government, being entirely absolute, left him under no apprehensions of being disobeyed. He had already given private orders for twelve thousand Saxons, who were upon their march with all possible speed. He farther recalled the eight thousand he had promised to the emperor to assist him in his wars against France, and which in the necessity he was reduced to, he was obliged to withdraw. This introduction of so many Saxons into Poland, was a sure means of alienating all mens affections, as it was a violation also of the law made by his own party, which allowed him but six thousand : but he knew very well, that if he was conqueror, they durst not complain ; and if he was conquered, they would never forgive his having introduced even six thousand. Whilst these soldiers were marching up in troops, and whilst he was flying from palatinate to palatinate to assemble the nobility who adhered to him, the king of Sweden at last arrived before Warsaw, on the 5th of May 1702. The gates were opened to him upon the first summons. He sent away the Polish garrison, dismissed the city-guard, every where posted guards of his own, ordered the inhabitants to bring in their arms, and content with having disarmed them, and not willing to exasperate them, he demanded no more of them than a contribution of an hundred thousand francs. King Augustus was then getting together his forces at Cracow, and was much surprized to see the cardinal primate one of the company. That man, whose heart burnt within him to finish the work he had begun, pretended to keep up the decency of his character to the last, and to dethrone his king with all the respectful behaviour of a good subject. He told him that the king of Sweden appeared disposed to a reasonable accommodation, and humbly begged leave that he might attend him. King Augustus granted him what he could not refuse, that is, the liberty to prejudice his affairs.

The cardinal primate, thus covering the baseness of his conduct, by the addition of treachery, hastened to the king of Sweden, before whom he had never yet ventured to present himself. He saw his majesty at Praag, not far

from Warsaw, but without the ceremonies, which had been used towards the ambassadors of the republic. He found the conqueror clad in a coat of coarse blue cloth, with brass buttons gilt, jack-boots, and buff-skin gloves, that reached up to his elbows, in a room without hangings, in company with the duke of Holstein his brother-in-law, count Piper his first minister, and several general officers. The king advanced some steps to meet the cardinal, and they had a conference together standing, of about a quarter of an hour, which Charles put an end to by saying aloud, "I will never give the Poles peace, till they have elected another king." The cardinal, who expected such a declaration, immediately signified it to all the palatinates, assuring them he was extremely concerned at it, and at the same time laying before them the necessity of complying with the conqueror.

Upon this news the king of Poland saw plainly that he must either lose his crown or preserve it by arms; and he used his utmost efforts to succeed in that great decision. All his Saxon troops were arrived from the frontiers of Saxony. The nobility of the palatinate of Cracow, where he still remained, came in a body to offer him their services. He in person exhorted every one of these gentlemen to remember the oaths they had taken; and they assured him that they would spill the last drop of their blood in his defence. Fortified with these succours, and the troops which were called the army of the crown, he went for the first time to seek in person the king of Sweden; and he was not long before he found him, for he was already marching against him towards Cracow.

The two kings met on the 19th of July 1702 in a very spacious plain near Clifflow between Warsaw and Cracow. Augustus had near four and twenty thousand men, and Charles XII. not above twelve thousand. The battle began with the playing of the artillery. Upon the first volley, which was discharged by the Saxons, the duke of Holstein who commanded the Swedish horse, a young prince of great courage and virtue, received a cannon-ball in the reins. The king enquired if he was dead, and was told that he was; he made no answer, but the tears fell from his eyes, and then covering his face for a mo-

ment with his hands, on a sudden he spurred his horse with fury, and rushed into the thickest of the enemy, at the head of his guards.

The king of Poland did all that could be expected from a prince who fought for his crown. He thrice led up his troops in person to the charge; but the ascendant of Charles XII. carried it, and gained a complete victory; the enemy's camp, colours, and artillery, and Augustus's military chest, were left to him. He made no stay upon the field of battle, but marched strait to Cracow, pursuing the king of Poland, who fled before him.

The citizens of Cracow were bold enough to shut their gates upon the conqueror. He caused them to be burst open, and took the castle by assault. His soldiers, the only men in the world who could abstain from pillage after a victory, did not offer the least ill-treatment to any one citizen; but the king made them pay sufficiently for the temerity of their resistance, by charging them with excessive contributions.

He departed from Cracow in the full resolution of pursuing Augustus without intermission. But within some miles from the city his horse fell under him and broke his thigh. They were obliged to carry him back to Cracow, where he was confined to his bed for six weeks in the hands of his surgeons. This accident gave Augustus leisure to breathe a little. He caused it immediately to be spread throughout Poland and Germany, that Charles XII. was killed by his fall. This false report, which was credited for some time, filled all mens minds with astonishment and uncertainty. In this small interval he assembles all the orders of the kingdom at Mariembourg, and then at Lublin, who had before been called together to Sendomin. The assembly was very large, as few of the Palatines refused to send their deputies thither. He regained almost all their inclinations by presents and promises, and by that affability, which is so necessary to absolute kings to win their subjects affections, and to elective kings to preserve them. The diet were soon undeceived concerning the false report of the king of Sweden's death; but that great body was already put in motion, and they suffered them to be carried along by the impulse they had



received, and all its members swore to continue faithful to their king.

The cardinal primate himself, affecting still to appear attached to king Augustus, came to the diet of Lublin; he kissed the king's hand, and made no scruple to take the oath with the rest. This oath consisted in swearing, that they had never attempted, nor ever would attempt any thing against Augustus. The king excused the cardinal from the first part of the oath, and the prelate blushed as he swore to the rest. The determination of this diet was that the republic of Poland should maintain an army of fifty thousand men at their own expence for the service of their prince; that they should allow the Swedes six weeks time to declare whether they intended peace or war, and the same term to the princes of Sapiieha, the first authors of the troubles in Lithuania, to come in and beg pardon of the king of Poland.

In the mean time Charles XII. recovered of his wound, and overturned all before him. Always fixt in his resolution of forcing the Poles themselves to dethrone their king, by the intrigues of the cardinal primate, he caused a new assembly to be called together at Warsaw to oppose that of Lublin. His generals represented to him that the affair might thus be protracted to a tedious length, and at last vanish in delays; that during this time the Moscovites were daily skirmishing with the troops he had left behind in Livonia and Ingria; that the event was not always favourable to the Swedes, and that his presence there, in all probability, would very soon become necessary. Charles, who was as steady in the execution of his projects, as he was brisk in his actions, answered, "Tho' I were to stay here fifty years, I would not leave the place 'till I had dethroned the king of Poland."

He left the assembly of Warsaw to dispute by discourses and writings with that of Lublin, and seek for precedents to justify their proceedings in the laws of the kingdom, laws which are constantly equivocal, and interpreted by both parties according to their inclinations, and which success alone renders incontestible. For himself having augmented his victorious troops with six thousand horse and eight thousand foot, which he received from Sweden, he marched



against the remains of the Saxon army he had beaten at Clissaw, which had gained time to rally and recruit whilst his fall from his horse had confined him to his bed. This army shunned his approach, and retired towards Prussia on the north-west of Warsaw. The river Bugh lay between him and his enemies. Charles swam over it at the head of his horse, whilst the foot went to seek a ford somewhat higher. On May 1st, 1703, he came up with the Saxons at a place called Pultusk. They were commanded by general Stenau to the number of about ten thousand. The king of Sweden in his precipitate march had brought no more along with him, being confident that a less number would have sufficed. The terror of his arms was so great, that one half of the Saxon army ran away at his approach, without staying for the battle. General Stenau stood firm for a while with two regiments, but the moment after, he was drawn along in the general flight of his army, which was dispersed before it was conquered. The Swedes did not take a thousand prisoners, nor kill six hundred men, having more difficulty in pursuing than defeating them. Augustus, who had nothing left him, but the scattered remains of the Saxons beaten on all sides, retired in haste to Thorn, an antient city of royal Prussia, situate upon the Weissel, and under the protection of Poland. Charles immediately prepared to besiege it. The king of Poland not thinking himself secure withdrew into Saxony. In the mean time Charles, who made nothing of so many brisk marches, swimming over rivers, and hurrying along with his foot mounted behind his horse, was not able to bring up his cannon before Thorn; but was obliged to wait 'till it was sent from Sweden by sea.

Whilst he was waiting for it, he took up his quarters within some miles of the city, and would often advance too near the ramparts, to view it. The plain dress he always wore was of greater service to him than he had ever imagined in these dangerous walks. It hindered him from being taken notice of, and pointed out by the enemy, as a person to be fired at. One day having approached very near with one of his generals named Lieven, who was dressed in scarlet trimm'd with gold, and fearing lest the general should be perceived, he straight ordered him

to walk behind him, moved by that magnanimity so natural to him, which even hindered him from reflecting that he exposed his own life to a manifest danger to save that of his subject.

Lieven discerning his error too late in having put on a remarkable habit, which exposed also those who were with him, and fearing equally for the king in whatever place he was, hesitated a while whether he ought to obey him; in the moment while this contest lasted, the king takes him by the arm, puts himself before him, and hides him; at the same instant a cannon ball, which came in flank, struck the general dead upon that very spot, which the king had scarce quitted. The death of this man, killed directly in his stead, and because he had a mind to save him, contributed not a little to confirm him in the notion he ever held of absolute predestination, and made him believe, that his fate, which protected him in so singular a manner, reserved him for the execution of greater things.

Every thing succeeded with him, and his negotiations and arms were equally fortunate. He was in a manner present throughout all Poland; for his grand mareschal Renchild was in the heart of those dominions with a great body of the army. Near thirty thousand Swedes under different generals, dispersed towards the north and the east upon the frontiers of Moscovy, withstood the efforts of the whole empire of Russia; and Charles was in the west at the other end of Poland, at the head of the best part of his troops.

The king of Denmark, tied down by the treaty of Travendal, which his weakness hindered him from breaking, continued silent. The elector of Brandenburg, who had acquired the title of king of Prussia, without any increase of power, durst not express his disgust at seeing the king of Sweden so near his dominions. His grand-father had been deprived of the best part of Pomerania by Gustavus Adolphus: and he had no security for the rest but the moderation of Charles. Farther towards the south-west between the rivers of Elbe and Weser lay the dutchy of Bremen, the last territory of the antient conquests of the Swedes, filled with strong garrisons, which opened to the

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conqueror a free passage into Saxony and the empire. Thus from the German ocean almost to the mouth of the Boristhenes, which makes the breadth of Europe, and to the gates of Moscow, all was in consternation, and every moment expecting an entire revolution. His vessels were masters of the Baltick, and employed in transporting prisoners from Poland into his own country. Sweden alone was calm in the midst of these great emotions, tasting the sweets of a profound peace, and enjoying the glory of her king, without bearing the weight of it; since his victorious troops were paid and maintained at the expence of the conquered.

In this general silence of the North before the arms of Charles XII. the city of Dantzick ventured to disoblige him. Fourteen frigats and forty transport vessels were bringing the king a supply of six thousand men, with cannon and ammunition to finish the siege of Thorn. These succours must necessarily pass up the Weissel. At the mouth of this river lies Dantzick, a rich and free town, enjoying with Elbing and Thorn the same privileges in Poland, as the Imperial towns have in Germany. Its liberty had been attacked by turns, by the Danes and Swedes, and some German princes, and was preserved only by the jealousy which these powers had of each other. Count Steinbock, one of the Swedish generals, assembled the magistrates in the king's name, demanding a passage for the troops, and some ammunition. The magistrates by an usual imprudence in those who treat with their superiors in strength, durst neither absolutely refuse, nor expressly grant what he demanded. General Steinbock made them give by force more than he had asked; and farther exacted from the town a contribution of a hundred thousand crowns by way of recompence for their imprudent denial. At last the recruits, the cannon and ammunition being arrived before Thorn, the siege was begun on the 22d of September.

Rovel, governor of the place, defended it a month with a garrison of five thousand men. And then it was forced to surrender at discretion. The garrison were made prisoners of war, and sent into Sweden. Rovel was presented to the king unarmed. His majesty who never

lost an opportunity of doing honour to merit in his enemies, gave him a sword with his own hand, made him a considerable present in money, and sent him away upon his parole. The honour the town of Thorn had, in having formerly produced Copernicus the founder of the true system of the world, had no influence upon a conqueror, too little conversant in such matters, and who only knew how to reward valour. This poor petty town was condemned to pay forty thousand crowns; an excessive contribution for such a place.

Elbing, a town built upon an arm of the Weiffel, founded by the Teutonic knights, and also annexed to Poland, did not make a proper advantage of the Dantzickers inadvertency, but hesitated too long about giving passage to the Swedish troops; and was more severely punished than Dantzick itself. Charles entered there in person on the 13th of December at the head of four thousand men armed with bayonets at the end of their muskets. The inhabitants in a consternation fell upon their knees in the streets; and begged for mercy. He took from them all their arms, lodged his soldiers in their houses, and then, having called the magistrates together, obliged them to raise that very day a contribution of two hundred and sixty thousand crowns. There were in the town two hundred pieces of cannon, and four hundred thousand weight of gun-powder, which he seized. The gaining a victory would not have brought him so many advantages, and all these successes were forerunners to the dethroning of king Augustus.

The cardinal had scarce taken an oath to his king, that he would attempt nothing against him, before he went to the assembly at Warsaw, but still under the pretence of peace. He was attended by three thousand soldiers raised upon his own estate, but upon coming thither talked of nothing but concord and obedience. At last he threw off the mask, and on the 14th of February 1704, declared in the name of the assembly, *Augustus elector of Saxony incapable of wearing the crown of Poland*. They then pronounced with a common voice, that the throne was vacant. The session of that day was not yet ended, when a courier from the king of Sweden brought a letter from

his majesty to the assembly. The cardinal opened the letter, which contained an order in form of a request to elect prince James Sobieski for their king. They were disposed to obey with joy, and even fixed the day of the election. The prince was then at Breslaw in Silesia, waiting with impatience for the crown, which his father had wore. He was complimented upon it, and some flatterers had even already given him the title of majesty, in speaking to him. As he was one day hunting at some leagues from Breslau with prince Constantine one of his brothers, thirty Saxon horsemen, sent privately by king Augustus, broke out of a sudden upon them from a neighbouring wood, surrounded the two princes, and carried them off without resistance. Fresh horses stood ready at a distance, upon which they were immediately carried to Lipsick, and close confined. This step at once broke all the measures of Charles, the cardinal, and the assembly at Warsaw.

Fortune, which makes sport with crowned heads, threw king Augustus almost at the same time upon the point of being taken himself. He was at dinner within three leagues of Cracow, relying upon an advanced guard posted at some distance, when general Renchild came suddenly upon him, after having carried off the guard. The king of Poland had but just time to get on horseback with ten others. General Renchild pursued him four days, ready to seize upon him every moment. The king fled to Sendomir, and the Swedish general followed him thither; and it was a singular piece of good fortune, that he made his escape.

In the mean time the king's party treated that of the cardinal, and were reciprocally treated by them, as traitors to their country. The army of the crown was divided between the two factions. Augustus, forced at last to accept of succours from the Moscovites, repented that he had not applied to them sooner. Sometimes he marched into Saxony, where his forces were exhausted; and sometimes he would return into Poland, where they durst not assist him. On the other side the king of Sweden reigned in Poland calm and victorious, and more absolutely than Augustus had ever done.

Count Piper who was as much of a politician, as his



master was of a hero, laid hold of the opportunity to advise Charles XII. to take upon himself the crown of Poland. He represented to him how easily he might bring it about with a victorious army, and a powerful party in the heart of a kingdom, which he had already brought under subjection. He tempted him with the title of *Defender of the Evangelical Religion*, a name which flattered the ambition of Charles. It was easy for him, he said, to do in Poland what Gustavus Vasa had done in Sweden; to introduce Lutheranism, and break the chains of the people, now slaves to the nobility and clergy. Charles gave way to the temptation for a moment; but glory was his idol. He sacrificed his interest to it, and the pleasure he would have had in taking Poland from the pope. He told count Piper, that he chose rather to give away kingdoms than gain them, and added smiling, "You were made for the minister of an Italian prince."

Charles lay still near Thorn, in that part of Royal Prussia which belongs to Poland; he thence observed all that was transacted at Warsaw, and kept the neighbouring powers in awe. Prince Alexander, brother of the two Sobieski's who were carried off in Silesia, came to demand vengeance of him. The king promised it him the more readily, as he judged it easy, and that he should be thereby revenged himself. But being impatient to give Poland a king, he offered the throne to prince Alexander, which fortune seemed bent to deny to his brother. He did not in the least expect a refusal. But prince Alexander told him that nothing should ever engage him to make an advantage of his elder brother's misfortunes. The king of Sweden, count Piper, all his friends, and especially the young Palatine of Posenania, Stanislaus Lecinskiy, pressed him to accept of it. But he continued firm in his resolution. The neighbouring princes were astonished at such an unexpected refusal, and knew not whom they should admire most; a king of Sweden, who at two and twenty years of age gave away the crown of Poland, or prince Alexander, who refused to accept it.

*The End of the Second Book.*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK III.

The CONTENTS.

*Stanislaus Lecfinsky chosen king of Poland; the death of the cardinal primate: the fine retreat of general Schullembourg; the exploits of the Czar; the foundation of Petersbourg; the battle of Fravenstad; Charles enters Saxony; the peace of Altranstadt; Augustus abdicates the crown, and in favour of Stanislaus; General Patkul, the Czar's plenipotentiary, is broke upon the wheel and quartered; Charles receives the ambassadors of foreign princes in Saxony; he goes alone to Dresden to visit Augustus, before his departure.*

**Y**OUNG Stanislaus Lecfinsky was then deputed by the assembly at Warsaw to give an account to the king of Sweden of several differences which had arose among them since prince James was carried away. Stanislaus had a very engaging aspect, full of bravery and sweetness, with an air of probity and openness, which is doubtless the greatest of all outward advantages, and adds a greater weight to words than eloquence itself. The discretion with which he spoke of king Augustus, of the assembly, the cardinal primate, and the different interests which divided Poland, made an impression upon Charles XII. He was a prince who understood mankind exceed-

ingly well, and had succeeded in the choice he had made of his generals and ministers. He designedly prolonged the conference, that he might the better sound the genius of the young deputy. And after the audience he said aloud, "That he had not seen a man so fit to reconcile all parties." He immediately made enquiry into the character of the Palatine Lecfinsky; and was informed that he was a person of great courage, and inured to fatigue; that he lay constantly upon a kind of straw mattress, requiring no service of his domestics about his person; that he was temperate to a degree little known to that climate; liberal, and adored by his vassals; and the only nobleman perhaps in Poland, who had any friends, at a time when no regard was paid to any ties but those of interest and faction.

This character, which in many particulars resembled his own, determined him entirely. He advised with no body, but without any caballing, or even public deliberation, said to two of his generals shewing them Lecfinsky, "See there is the king whom the Poles shall have."

His resolution was fixt, and Stanislaus as yet knew nothing of the matter, when the cardinal primate came to wait upon Charles. The prelate was king during the interregnum, and was desirous of prolonging his transient authority. Charles asked him whom he thought in Poland deserving of the crown. I know but three, answered the cardinal. The first is the prince Sapielha; but his imperious, cruel and despotic humour will never agree well with a free people. The second is Lubomirsky, grand general of the crown; but he is too old, and suspected of loving money too much. The third is the Palatine of Posenania, more deserving indeed than the other two, if his want of experience did not render him incapable of governing so capricious a nation. The cardinal thus excluded all whom he proposed, and would have them believed unfit to reign, whom he had pronounced alone worthy of it. The king of Sweden concluded the conversation by telling him, that Stanislaus Lecfinsky should be their king.

The cardinal had scarce left the king before he received a courier from the lady, who was absolute over him. She

told him in her letter, that she was determined to marry her daughter to the son of Lubomirsky, and conjured him to employ all his interest with the king to give the crown of Poland to the father. The letter came too late, the cardinal had given such impressions of Lubomirsky, as he could never efface. He used his utmost address to draw the king of Sweden insensibly into the new interest which he embraced, and strove more especially to divert him from the choice of Stanislaus. But what have you, says the king, to object against him? Sir, says the prelate, he is too young. The king directly answered, "He is much about my age," turned his back upon the prelate, and immediately dispatched count Horn to signify to the assembly at Warsaw, that they must elect a king in five days, and that they must chuse Stanislaus Leszinsky. Count Horn arrived upon the 7th of July, and fixed the day of the election to the 12th, as if he had ordered the decampment of a battalion. The cardinal primate, disappointed of the fruit of so many intrigues, returned to the assembly, where he left no stone unturned to make the election, wherein he had no share, prove abortive. But the king of Sweden coming himself incognito to Warsaw, he was obliged to be silent. All that the primate could do was to absent himself from the election; he determined to act as neuter, without appearing to assist or oppose the resolution of the king of Sweden, carrying himself even between Augustus and Stanislaus, and waiting for an opportunity of prejudicing them both.

On Saturday the 12th of July, the day appointed for the election, about three in the afternoon the assembly met at Colo, the place designed for the ceremony, and the bishop of Posnania presided in stead of the primate. He came attended with several persons of distinction, and a large body of gentlemen of the party. The king of Sweden mixt with them that he might in secret enjoy the fruits of his power. Count Horn and two other general officers assisted publicly at the solemnity, as ambassadors extraordinary from Charles to the republic. The session lasted 'till nine in the evening; and the bishop of Posnania put an end to it by declaring, in the name of the diet, *Stanislaus, elected king of Poland.* Charles XII. was

the first in the crowd to cry out *vivat*; they threw up their hats into the air, and the noise of the acclamations quite stifled the cries of the opposers.

It was of no service to the cardinal primate, and those who had a mind to continue neutrals, that they had absented themselves from the election. They were all of them forced the next day to come and pay homage to the new king, who received them as if he had been thoroughly satisfied with their conduct. The greatest mortification they had was, that they were obliged to wait upon him to the king of Sweden's quarters. His majesty gave all the honours to the king he had made, which were due to a king of Poland; and to add a greater weight to his new dignity, assigned him money and troops.

The name of king made no alteration in the manners of Stanislaus; it only caused him to turn his thoughts somewhat more towards war. A storm had placed him upon the throne, and another might drive him thence. He had one half of his kingdom yet to conquer, and was to secure himself in the other; and being treated as a sovereign at Warsaw, and a rebel at Sandomir, he prepared, by force of arms, to make himself acknowledged by all the world.

Charles XII. immediately departed from Warsaw to finish the conquest of Poland. He had fixed the general rendezvous of his army before Leopold, the capital of the great Palatinate of Russia, a place considerable in itself, and much more so for the riches it contained. It was thought that it would hold out fifteen days, by means of the fortifications which king Augustus had made there. The conqueror sat down before it on September 5th, and the next day carried it by assault; and all who resisted were put to the sword. The victorious troops, who were now masters of the town, did not disband to run after pillage, notwithstanding the report of the treasures which were in Leopold; but ranged themselves in order of battle in the great square. There the remains of the garrison came to surrender themselves prisoners of war. The king then proclaimed his orders by sound of trumpet, that all the inhabitants, who had any effects belonging



to king Augustus or his adherents, should bring them in person before night came on, under pain of death. The measures were so well taken, that few ventured to disobey him, and they brought his majesty four hundred chests filled with gold and silver coin, plate and other valuable effects.

The beginning of Stanislaus's reign was almost the same day made remarkable by a very different event. Some affairs which absolutely required his presence had obliged him to continue at Warsaw. He had with him his mother, his wife, and his two daughters, of which the youngest was then but a year old, and has since been queen of France. The cardinal primate, the bishop of Posen, and some great men of Poland made up his new court. His guards consisted of six thousand Poles of the army of the crown, who were lately brought over into his service; and whose fidelity he had not yet made trial of. General Horn, the governor of the town, had not with him besides above fifteen hundred Swedes. They were at Warsaw in perfect tranquillity, and Stanislaus reckoned to depart thence in a few days to go to the conquest of Leopold: when all of a sudden he received information that a numerous army was drawing near to the town. This was king Augustus, who by a fresh effort, and one of the finest marches that ever general made, having excluded the king of Sweden, was coming up with twenty thousand men to fall upon Warsaw, and carry off his rival.

Warsaw was very ill fortified, and the Polish troops, who defended it, were not to be relied on. Augustus had intelligence within the town that if Stanislaus tarried, he was sure to be undone. He sent his family therefore into Posen under the guard of those Polish troops, in whom he could put most confidence. The cardinal primate fled one of the first to the frontiers of Prussia. Several gentlemen took different roads. The new king went directly to Charles XII. learning early to suffer disgrace, and forced to quit his capital within six weeks after he had been there advanced to the sovereignty. The bishop of Posen alone could not escape, being confined to Warsaw by a dangerous illness. One part of the six thousand Poles

ders followed Stanislaus, and another conducted his family. They sent those into Posenania, whose fidelity they would not expose to the temptation of returning into the service of king Augustus. As to general Horn, who was governor of Warsaw in the name of the king of Sweden, he took up his residence in the castle with his fifteen hundred Swedes.

Augustus entered the capital as a sovereign incensed and victorious. Every inhabitant was taxed beyond his abilities, and ill treated by the soldiers. The cardinal's palace and all the houses of the confederate lords, with all their possessions both in town and country, were given up to plunder. But what was most extraordinary in this transient revolution, the pope's nuncio, who attended upon king Augustus, demanded in the name of his master, that the bishop of Posenania should be given up into his hands, as subject to the jurisdiction of the court of Rome, as he was a bishop and favourer of a prince advanced to the throne by the arms of a Lutheran.

The court of Rome, which has always endeavoured to increase its temporal power by means of the spiritual, had long established a kind of jurisdiction in Poland, with the pope's nuncio at the head of it. The ministers never failed to lay hold of all favourable conjunctures to extend their power, which was revered by the multitude, though always contested by men of better understanding. They had claimed a right of judging in all ecclesiastical causes, and had in times of trouble usurped several other prerogatives in which they maintained themselves 'till about the year 1728. when these abuses were retrenched, which indeed are never reformed, 'till they are become altogether intolerable.

King Augustus, who was very glad to punish the bishop of Posenania without offending against decency, and at the same time to do an acceptable service to the court of Rome, though he would readily have opposed it upon any other occasion, gives up the Polish prelate into the hands of the nuncio. The bishop, after having seen his palace plundered, was carried by the soldiers to the Italian minister's lodging, and from thence sent into Saxony, where he died. Count Horn stood the constant fire of the

enemy in the castle, wherein he was enclosed; but the place at last being no longer able to hold out, he was forced to beat a parley, and remained prisoner of war, with his fifteen hundred Swedes. This was the first advantage that king Augustus gained, in the torrent of his ill fortune, against the victorious arms of his enemy.

Count Horn, released upon his parole, came to Leopold, within a small time after Stanislaus. He took the liberty of complaining a little to the king of Sweden, that his majesty had not relieved Warsaw. "Be not under much concern about it, my poor count, (says the king) we must let king Augustus do something by way of amusement, or otherwise he would grow tired of having us so long in his neighbourhood; but take my word for it, he shall not be the better for this advantage."

In reality this last effort of Augustus was but the blaze of a fire that was going out. His troops, which were hastily got together, were either Poles ready to abandon him upon the first disgrace, or Saxon recruits who had never yet seen any service, or vagabond Cossacks fitter to plunder the conquered, than to conquer. All trembled at the name of the king of Sweden.

The conqueror, accompanied by king Stanislaus, went in quest of his enemy at the head of the best part of his troops. The Saxon army fled constantly before him. The towns for thirty miles round sent him their keys, and no day passed which was not signalized with some advantage. Successes began to grow too familiar to Charles. He said it was rather hunting than fighting, and complained of not gaining a victory on more difficult terms.

Augustus committed the care of his army for some time to count Schullembourg, a very able general; and indeed he stood in need of all his experience at the head of an army under such discouragements. He was under more concern to preserve his master's troops than to conquer; he acted by stratagem, and the two kings with vigour. He marched off unknown to them, seized upon advantageous passages, and sacrificed some horse, to give time to his foot to retire with safety.

After several artifices and countermarches he found

himself near Punitz in the Palatinate of Posenia, imagining that the king of Sweden and king Stanislaus were above fifty leagues off from him. But coming thither, he learnt that the two kings had marched those fifty leagues in nine days, and were ready to fall upon him with ten or twelve thousand horse. Schullembourg had not a thousand horse, nor above eight thousand foot, and was to keep his ground against a superior army, the name of the king of Sweden, and the natural fears which so many defeats had raised in the Saxons. He was ever of opinion, though opposed in it by the German generals, that the foot might stand against the horse in an open campaign, even without the benefit of chevauz de frise; and he ventured to make trial of it that day against the victorious horse commanded by the two kings, and the most experienced of the Swedish generals. He posted himself so advantageously, that he could not be surrounded; his first rank bent one knee upon the ground, and was armed with pikes and fusées; the soldiers stood extremely close, and presented to the enemies horse a kind of rampart pointed with pikes and bayonets; the second rank, bending a little upon the shoulders of the first, fired over their heads, and the third standing upright, fired at the same time behind the other two. The Swedes fell upon the Saxons with their usual impetuosity, who waited for them unshaken; and the discharge of the muskets, the pikes and bayonets startled the horses, and set them a capering instead of advancing. By this means the Swedes made their attack in disorder, and the Saxons defended themselves by keeping their ranks.

If Charles had ordered his horse to alight, the army of Schullembourg must have been inevitably destroyed. There was nothing the general was so much afraid of, and he every moment expected that the enemy would have taken that resolution. But neither the king of Sweden, who had so often practised all the stratagems of war, nor any of his generals ever thought of it. This unequal fight of a body of horse against the foot, though often interrupted and renewed, lasted three hours. The Swedes lost more horses than men. Schullembourg at last gave way, but his troops were not broken. He drew them up

into an oblong battalion, and though he had received five wounds in the engagement, he retired in good order in this form about midnight to the small town of Gurau, within three leagues of the field of battle. And he scarce began to breathe in that place, before the two kings appeared suddenly at his heels.

Beyond Gurau, towards the river Oder, lay a thick wood, through which the Saxon general saved his fatigued army. The Swedes without pausing pursued him through the thickets, making their way with difficulty through places which were scarce passable by people on foot; and the Saxons had not crossed the wood above five hours before the Swedish horse. On the other side the wood runs the river Parts at the foot of a village named Ruten. Schullembourg had sent before in all haste to get the boats together, and carried his troops across the river, which were already half lost. Charles was come to one side of the river by that time Schullembourg had got to the other. No general ever retreated with so much art, nor did ever conqueror so briskly pursue his enemy. The reputation of Schullembourg depended upon his escaping from the king of Sweden, and the king thought his glory concerned in taking Schullembourg and the rest of his army. He lost no time, but swam his horse cross the river. And thus the Saxons were enclosed between the river Parts, and the great river of Oder, which has its source in Silesia, and is in this place very deep and rapid.

The loss of Schullembourg appeared inevitable; he still strove all he could to extricate himself from this extremity by one of those turns of art, which are as valuable as victories, and the more glorious, because fortune has no share in them. He had not above four thousand men left; a mill, which he filled with grenadiers, lay on his right hand, and a morass on his left; he had a fosse before him, and his rear-guard was upon the banks of the Oder. He had no bridges of boats to throw over the river, but in the evening gave orders for planks. Charles upon his arrival immediately attacks the mill in full persuasion that, after he had taken it, the Saxons must either perish in the river, or die sword in hand, or at least surrender themselves prisoners at discretion with their general. In the



mean while the planks were got ready, and the Saxons passed the Oder over them in the night; and when Charles had forced the mill, he found no more of the enemies army. The two kings honoured this retreat with their commendations, and it is spoken of to this day in the empire with admiration. And Charles could not help saying, "Schullembourg has conquered us to day."

But what was thus glorious to Schullembourg, was of very little service to king Augustus. He once more abandoned Poland to his enemies, withdrew into Saxony, and repaired the fortifications of Dresden with precipitation, already with reason trembling for the capital of his hereditary dominions.

Thus was Poland subdued by Charles XII. His generals after his example had beaten several small bodies of Moscovites of Courland, who ever since the great battle of Narva had not shewn themselves but in small companies, and made war in those quarters like the vagabond Tartars, who plunder and run away, and appear again but to repeat their flight.

Wherever the Swedes were, they thought themselves secure of victory, though they were but twenty against a hundred. Under these happy conjunctures Stanislaus prepared for his coronation. The fortune, which had given him the election at Warsaw, and since had driven him thence, called him back once more thither to the acclamations of a number of the nobility, whom the fate of arms attached to him. A diet was appointed to meet there, and all other obstacles were removed; only the court of Rome were disposed to cross it.

It was natural to imagine, that this court should declare in favour of king Augustus, who from a Protestant was turned Roman Catholick to gain the crown in opposition to Stanislaus, who was placed upon the throne by the great enemy of the Romish religion. Clement XII. the then pope, sent briefs to all the prelates of Poland, and in particular to the cardinal primate, by which he threatened them with excommunication, if they presumed to assist at the consecration of Stanislaus, or form any attempt against the prerogatives of king Augustus.

The primate, at that time retired to Dantzick, was

suspected of having occasioned these briefs to be brought from Rome in order to re-kindle a fire, which he himself durst not blow up. If these briefs were delivered to the bishops that were at Warsaw, there was cause to apprehend, that some of them would obey them through weakness, and the major part lay hold of the opportunity of being more difficult to be brought over to Stanislaus's interest, in proportion as they should become more necessary. All possible precaution was therefore taken to hinder these letters of the pope from being received at Warsaw. A Franciscan privately received them, and undertook to deliver them into the bishops own hands. He straight presented one to the suffragan of Chelm. This prelate, who was fixed in the interest of king Stanislaus, presented it to his majesty unopened. The king sent for the monk, and asked him how he durst undertake to deliver a writing of this nature? The Franciscan answered, he did it by order of his general. Stanislaus bid him for the future pay a greater regard to the orders of his king, than to those of the general of the Franciscans, and sent him out of the town that moment.

The same day a placart was published by the king of Sweden, by which all ecclesiastics both secular and regular in Warsaw were forbid to intermeddle with affairs of state under very severe penalties. And for the greater security he caused guards to be posted at the doors of all the prelates houses, and forbid any stranger to enter into the town. He took upon himself the exercise of these small severities that there might not be any difference between Stanislaus and the clergy upon his first coming to the crown. He said that he refreshed himself from the fatigues of war, by giving a check to the intrigues of the court of Rome, and that he must fight against it with paper, as against other princes by real arms.

The cardinal primate was solicited by Charles and Stanislaus to perform the ceremony of the coronation. But he did not think it convenient to quit Dantzick to consecrate a king, who had been chosen against his inclinations; but as it was always his policy to do nothing without having some pretence for it, he had a mind to provide a lawful excuse for his refusal. He caused the

pope's brief to be fixed in the night-time to the gate of his own house. The magistracy of Dantzick in a great rage made enquiry after the persons who had done it, but they could not be found. The primate pretended to be mighty angry, but in reality was very well pleased. He had a reason for not consecrating the new king, and at the same time kept fair with Charles XII. Augustus, Stanislaus, and the pope. He died within a few days after, leaving his country in a terrible confusion; and as politicians themselves have sometimes remorse in their last moments, he wrote to king Augustus upon his death-bed to ask his pardon.

The coronation was solemnized quietly and magnificently on October 4th, 1705, in the town of Warsaw, notwithstanding the usual custom in Poland of crowning their kings at Cracow. Stanislaus Lecinski and his wife Charlotte Opalinska were crowned king and queen of Poland by the hands of the archbishop of Leopold, assisted by several other prelates. Charles XII. was present at the ceremony *incognito*, as he had been at the election; the only fruit he reaped from his conquests.

Whilst he was thus giving a king to the conquered Poles, and Denmark did not presume to trouble him; whilst the king of Prussia courted his friendship, and Augustus was retired to his hereditary dominions; the Czar grew every day more formidable. He had feebly assisted Augustus in Poland, but had made powerful diversions in Ingria.

He not only began to be a great soldier himself, but also to teach his Moscovites the art of war: discipline was established in his troops; he had good engineers, a serviceable artillery, and a great many good officers; and had learnt the great art of subsisting his armies. Some of his generals both knew how to fight, and, if occasion required, to decline it; and besides, he had got together a fleet which was able to make head against the Swedes in the Baltic Sea.

Grown strong by all these advantages which were owing to his genius only, and the absence of the king of Sweden, he took Narva by assault, on August 21st, 1704, after a regular siege, having prevented its being relieved

either by sea or land. As soon as the soldiers were masters of the town they fell to plunder, and gave themselves up to the most enormous barbarities. The Czar ran from place to place to put a stop to the disorder and massacre. He himself snatched the women out of the hands of the soldiers, who were going to cut their throats, after having ravished them. He was even obliged to kill with his own hands several Moscovites, who did not hearken to his orders. They yet shew the table in the town-house at Narva, upon which he laid his sword, as he entered, and tell the words which he spoke to the citizens, who flocked thither after him: "It is not, says he, with the blood of the inhabitants, that my sword is stained, but with that of the Moscovites, whom I have shed to save your lives."

The Czar aspired at greater achievements than the destruction of towns. He was at that time laying the foundations of a city not far from Narva, in the midst of his new conquests. This was the city of Petersburg, which he has since made the seat of his residence, and the center of his trade. 'Tis situate between Finland and Ingria, in a fenny island, around which the Neva divides itself into several branches, before it falls into the Gulph of Finland. He drew himself the plan of the town, the fortress, the port, the keys which adorn it, and the forts which defend the entrance into it. This desert and uncultivated island, which was nothing but a heap of mud in the short summer of those climates, and in winter a frozen pool, which was not to be approached by land, but by passing over wild forests and deep morasses, and had been 'till then the habitation of bears and wolves, was in 1703. filled with upwards of three hundred thousand men, whom the Czar had called together from the farthest parts of his dominions. The peasants of the kingdom of Astracan, and those who inhabit the frontiers of China, were transported to Petersburg. He was obliged to break thro' forests, to open ways, to dry up moors, to raise banks, before he could lay the foundations of the town. The whole was a force put upon nature. But the Czar was resolved to people a country, which did not seem designed to be inhabited by men. Neither the inundations which

ruined his works, nor the barrenness of the soil, nor the ignorance of the workmen, nor even a mortality which carried off two hundred thousand of his men at his first setting out, could shake his fixt resolution. It is not easy to foresee, whether this colony will long subsist; but posterity will stand astonished at its being founded amidst so many obstacles, as nature, the genius of the people, and an unfortunate war, had raised against it. Petersburg was become a city in 1705. and its port was filled with vessels. The emperor drew strangers thither in great numbers by the rewards he gave them, bestowing lands upon some, houses upon others, and encouraging all the artists, which came to civilize that savage climate. Above all, he had made it inaccessible to the efforts of the enemy. The Swedish generals, who frequently beat his troops in every other quarter, were not able to do the least damage to this growing colony. It enjoyed a perfect calm in the midst of the war which surrounded it.

The Czar, in thus forming himself new dominions, held out still an helping hand to king Augustus, who was losing his; he persuaded him by general Patkul, who had lately passed into the service of Moscovy, and was then the Czar's ambassador in Saxony, to come to Grodno to confer with him once more upon the unhappy state of his affairs. King Augustus came thither with some troops, attended by general Schullembourg, whose passage over the Oder had rendered him famous in the north, and in whom he placed his last hopes. The Czar arrived, with an hundred thousand men marching after him. The two monarchs formed new schemes of war. King Augustus, as he was dethroned, was no longer afraid of exasperating the Poles by giving up their country to the Moscovite troops. It was resolved that the Czar's army should be divided into several bodies to oppose every motion of the king of Sweden. During the time of this interview king Augustus instituted the order of the white eagle, a weak expedient to draw over to his interest certain Polish lords, who were more desirous of real advantages than a mere nominal honour, which becomes ridiculous, when held of a prince, who has nothing left of a king but the title. The conference of the two kings end-



ed in an extraordinary manner. The Czar departed suddenly, and left his troops to his ally, to go and extinguish a rebellion in person, which threatened him in Astracan. He was scarce gone from him, before king Augustus ordered Patkul to be taken up at Dresden. All Europe were in amaze that, contrary to the laws of nations, and in appearance to his own interest, he should venture to imprison the ambassador of the only prince who protected him.

The secret of the affair was thus. Patkul, proscribed in Sweden for having maintained the privileges of Livonia his country, had been general to king Augustus; but his high and active spirit ill agreeing with the haughty disposition of general Fleming, the king's favourite, more imperious and more active than himself, he had passed into the service of the Czar, whose general he then was, and ambassador to Augustus. He was a man of great discernment, and had discovered that the views of Fleming and the chancellor of Saxony were to offer peace to the king of Sweden at any rate. He formed immediately a design to prevent them, and to bring about an accommodation between the Czar and Sweden. The chancellor countermined his project, and obtained leave to seize upon his person. King Augustus told the Czar that Patkul was a perfidious wretch and would betray them both. However he had no other fault, but that of having served his new master too well; but an unseasonable piece of service is often recompensed with the punishment of treason.

In the mean while the hundred thousand Moscovites on one side, divided into several small bodies, burnt and ravaged the estates of the adherents to Stanislaus; and Schullembourg on the other was advancing with his fresh troops. But the fortune of the Swedes dispersed these two armies in less than two months. Charles XII. and Stanislaus fell upon the separate bodies of the Moscovites one after another; but so briskly, that one Moscovite general was beaten before he knew of the defeat of his companion.

No obstacle could put a stop to the progress of the conqueror. If he found a river in his way betwixt him and the enemy, Charles and his Swedes would swim their hor-

ses over it. One party of Swedes took the baggage of Augustus, in which were two hundred thousand crowns of silver coin; Stanislaus made a seizure of eight hundred thousand ducats belonging to prince Menzicof the general of the Moscovites. Charles at the head of his horse would often march thirty leagues in four and twenty hours, every soldier leading another horse in his hand to mount, when his own was weary. The Moscovites, terrified and reduced to a small number, fled in disorder beyond the Boristhenes.

Whilst Charles was thus driving the Moscovites before him into the heart of Lithuania, Schulembourg at last repassed the Oder, and came at the head of twenty thousand men to give battle to the grand marshal Renschild, who was looked upon as the best general Charles XII. had, and was called the Parmenio of the Alexander of the North. These two famous generals, who seemed to share in the fate of their masters, met near Punitz in a place called Fravenstad, a territory already fatal to the troops of Augustus. Renschild had no more than thirteen battalions and two and twenty squadrons, which all together made about ten thousand men; and Schulembourg had twice as many. It is to be observed, that he had in his army between six and seven thousand Moscovites, which had long been disciplined in Saxony, and were looked upon as experienced soldiers, who joined the German discipline to the Russian fierceness. The battle of Fravenstad was fought on February 12th, 1706. But this very general Schulembourg, who with four thousand men had in a manner eluded the fortune of the king of Sweden, sunk under that of general Renschild. The engagement lasted not a quarter of an hour, the Saxons did not resist a moment, and the Moscovites threw down their arms upon the first appearance of the Swedes; the terror was so sudden, and the disorder so great, that the conquerors found upon the field of battle seven thousand fuses all charged, which they had thrown away without firing. No defeat was ever quicker, more complete and more shameful; and yet no general had ever made a finer disposition than Schulembourg that day by the confession of all the Saxon and Swedish officers, who learnt

by the-consequence how little human prudence is mistress of events.

Among the prisoners there was found an entire regiment of Frenchmen; these wretches had been taken prisoners by the troops of Saxony in 1704. at the famous battle of Hochsted, so fatal to the grandeur of Lewis XIV. They had since enlisted themselves into the service of king Augustus, who had formed them into a regiment of dragoons, had given the command of them to a Frenchman, of the family of Joyeuse. The colonel was killed upon the first, or rather the sole charge of the Swedes; and the entire regiment were made prisoners of war. From that day these Frenchmen desired that they might be allowed to serve Charles XII. and were received into his service by a singular fate, which reserved them to change again their conqueror and master.

As to the Moscovites, they begged for life upon their knees, but Renschild ordered them to be inhumanely massacred in cold blood above six hours after the battle, to revenge on them the depredations of their country, and disencumber himself of a number of prisoners he knew not what to do with.

The king was upon his return from Lithuania when he received the news of this victory; but the satisfaction he received from it was disturbed by a small fit of jealousy, and he could not help saying, *Renschild will not compare himself with me again.*

Augustus now found himself without refuge, he had nothing left himself but Cracow, where he was shut up with two regiments of Moscovites, two of Saxons and some troops of the army of the crown, by whom he was even afraid he should be delivered up to the conqueror; but his misfortunes were completed, when they heard that Charles XII. had at last entered Saxony on September 1st, 1706.

The diet of Ratisbone, which represents the empire and whose resolutions are often as ineffectual as they are solemn, declared the king of Sweden an enemy to the empire, in case he passed beyond the Oder with his army; which very determination confirmed him in his resolution of marching into Germany.

Upon his approach the villages were deserted, and the inhabitants fled on all sides. Charles did here, as before at Copenhagen. He caused his proclamation to be fixed up in all places, that he had no other design but to procure peace; that all those who returned to their houses, and paid the contributions he should require, should be treated as his own subjects, and the rest pursued without quarter. This declaration from a prince, who was never known to have broken his word, brought back the inhabitants in numbers, whom fear had driven away. He encamped at Alranstad, near the plain of Lutzen, the field of battle famous for the victory and death of Gustavus Adolphus. He had a curiosity to see the place where that great man fell; and when they had brought him upon the spot, "I have endeavoured," says he, "to live like him, it may be God may grant me one day a death as glorious."

From this camp he gave orders to the estates of Saxony to meet, and send him without delay the registers of the finances of the electorate. As soon as he had them in his power, and was informed exactly of what Saxony could supply, he imposed a tax upon it of six hundred twenty five thousand rixdollars a month. Besides which contribution, the Saxons were obliged to furnish every Swedish soldier with two pound of meat, two pound of bread, two pots of beer, and four pence a pay, with forage for the horse. The contributions being thus regulated, the king established a new method of guarding the Saxons from the insults of his soldiers. He ordered in all the towns where he put garrisons, that every inn-keeper, in whose house the soldiers were quartered, should give certificates of their behaviour every month, without which the soldier was not to have his pay. Inspectors besides went every fifteen days from house to house to make enquiry whether the Swedes had occasioned any disturbance; and care was taken to make the inn-keepers amends, and punish the persons in fault.

But though the troops of Charles XII. lived under so severe a discipline, that they plundered not the towns which were carried by assault, before they had leave; that they even plundered in a regular manner, and left off upon

the first signal; and the Swedes to this day boast of the discipline they observed in Saxony; yet the Saxons complain of most terrible ravages committed by them; contradictions which it would be impossible to reconcile, if we did not consider that men are apt to look upon the same objects with different views. It can scarce be conceived but that the conquerors must at some times have transgressed the rules of moderation; and that the conquered should censure the slightest damages, as the most shocking injuries. One day, as the king was riding out near Lipsick, a Saxon peasant threw himself at his feet to ask justice of him against a grenadier, who had just taken from him what he had designed for his family's dinner. The king ordered the soldier to be brought before him, "And is it true," says he, "with a stern countenance, that you have robbed this man?" Sir, says the soldier, "I have not done him so much mischief, as your majesty has done his master; you have taken a kingdom from him, and I have only taken a turkey from this fellow." The king gave the poor man ten ducats with his own hand, and pardoned the soldier for the boldness of his reply, saying, "Remember, friend, if I have taken a kingdom from king Augustus, I have taken nothing for my self."

The great mart of Lipsick was held as usual; the tradesmen came thither in perfect security; not one Swedish soldier was seen in the fair; it was said the king of Sweden's army lay only in Saxony to keep the peace. He commanded throughout all the electorate with as absolute a power and as profound tranquillity as in Stockholm.

King Augustus wandering in Poland, and deprived at once both of his kingdom and electorate, at last wrote a letter with his own hand to Charles XII. to ask a peace. This letter he secretly sent by baron Inhof and Mons. Finsten, Referendary of the privy council; he gave them full powers and a blank signed; go, says he, *endeavour to obtain for me reasonable and Christian conditions*. He was reduced to the necessity of concealing this overture for peace and not to have recourse to the mediation of any prince; for, being then in Poland at the mercy of the Moscovites, he had reason to fear that the dangerous ally,



whom he abandoned, would revenge upon him his submissions to the conqueror. His two plenipotentiaries came by night to Charles XIIth's camp, and had a private audience. The king read the letter, and, "Gentlemen, says he to the plenipotentiaries, I will give you my answer in a moment." He immediately retired into his cabinet and wrote as follows :

**I** *Consent to give peace upon the following conditions, in which it must not be expected that I shall make the least alteration :*

*I. That king Augustus renounce for ever the crown of Poland; that he acknowledge Stanislaus as lawful king, and that he promise never to remount the throne, not even after the death of Stanislaus.*

*II. That he renounce all other treaties, and particularly those he has made with Moscow.*

*III. That he send back with honour into my camp the princes Sobieski, and all the prisoners he has been able to take.*

*IV. That he deliver into my hands all the deserters, who have entered into his service, and particularly John Patkul: and that all proceeding be stopped against such as have passed from his service into mine.*

He gave this paper to count Piper, charging him to negotiate the rest with the plenipotentiaries of king Augustus. They were shocked at the severity of the propositions; and used all the little art men can employ, where power is wanting, to soften the rigour of the king of Sweden. They had several conferences with count Piper, but could gain no other answer from him to all their persuasions, than "Such is the will of the king my master, and he never changes his resolutions."

Whilst this peace was silently negotiating in Saxony, fortune seemed to put king Augustus into a condition of obtaining one more honourable, and of treating with his conqueror upon a more equal footing.

Prince Menzicof, generalissimo of the Moscovite army, brought him into Poland a body of thirty thousand men, at the time when he not only did not desire their assistance

any longer, but even feared it. He had with him some Polish and Saxon troops, which in all made up about six thousand men; surrounded with this small body by prince Menzicof's army, he was under the most terrible apprehensions, in case they should discover his negotiation. He saw himself at the same time dethroned by his enemy, and in danger of being detained a prisoner by his ally. In this nice circumstance there appeared in view of the army one of the Swedish generals, named Maderfield, at the head of ten thousand men at Calish, near the palatinate of Polesia. Prince Menzicof pressed king Augustus to give them battle. The king in the utmost perplexities delayed it under several pretexts; for though the enemy had but one third number, there were four thousand Swedes in Maderfield's army, and that was enough to render the event doubtful; and to fall upon the Swedes during the negotiation, and lose the victory, was to ruin him past all redemption. He therefore determined to send a person upon whom he could rely to the general of the enemy, to let him into part of the secret of the peace, and advise him to retreat; but this advice had a very different effect from what was expected. General Maderfield imagined that a snare was laid to intimidate him, and upon the bare force of that imagination he resolved to risk the battle.

The Moscovites that day conquered the Swedes in a pitched battle for the first time. This victory, which king Augustus gained almost against his own inclination, was complete, and he entered triumphant in the midst of his bad fortune into Warsaw, formerly the capital of his kingdom, but then a dismantled and ruined town, ready to receive any conqueror, and to acknowledge the strongest for king. He was tempted to seize upon this moment for prosperity, and to fall upon the king of Sweden in Saxony with the Moscovite army. But upon recollection, that Charles XII. was at the head of a Swedish army, which till then had been invincible, that the Moscovites would forsake him upon the first information of the treaty he had begun; that Saxony, his hereditary dominions, already exhausted of men and money, would be equally ravaged by the Moscovites and Swedes; that the empire

taken up in a war with France could not assist him; that he should be left without dominions, money, or friends; he judged it better to comply with the terms the king of Sweden should impose upon him. These terms were made more severe when Charles had information, that king Augustus had fallen upon his troops during the negotiation. His passion and the pleasure of humbling an enemy still more, who had gained an advantage over him, made him the more inflexible upon all the articles of the treaty. Thus the victory of King Augustus served only to render his situation the more unfortunate, a circumstance which in all probability never happened to any one but himself.

He had just sung *te Deum* at Warsaw, when Finsten, one of his plenipotentiaries, arrived in Saxony, with the treaty of peace, which deprived him of his crown. Augustus paused a while, but signed it, and then set out for Saxony, in vain hopes, that his presence might soften the king of Sweden, and that his enemy would perhaps call to mind the antient alliance of their houses, and the blood which united them.

The two princes had their first interview at Gunterdorf in count Piper's quarters, without any ceremony. Charles XII. was in jack-boots, with a piece of black taffety tied round his neck instead of a cravat; his cloaths were as usual made of a coarse blue cloath, with brass buttons. He had a long sword by his side, which had served him in the battle of Narva, and upon the pommel of which he would often lean. The conversation turned wholly upon those great boots. Charles XII. told king Augustus, he had not laid them aside for six years, except when he went to sleep. These trifles were the sole discourse, that passed between two kings, one of whom had dispossessed the other of a crown. Augustus spoke all the while with an air of complaisance and satisfaction, which princes and men habituated to great affairs know how to assume amidst the most cruel mortifications. The two kings dined together several times afterwards. Charles always affected to give the right hand to king Augustus; but was so far from softening the rigour of his demands, that he made them still harder. He obliged

the king elector, not only to send Stanislaus the jewels and records of the crown, but likewise to write him a letter of congratulation upon his accession. And he absolutely insisted upon the giving up of general Patkul without delay. Augustus therefore was forced to write the following letter, to his rival.

SIR and BROTHER,

**A**S I ought to have regard to the requests of the king of Sweden, I cannot avoid congratulating your majesty upon your accession to the crown, though perhaps the advantageous treaty the king of Sweden has lately concluded for your majesty, might have excused me from this correspondence; however I congratulate your majesty, beseeching God that your subjects may be more faithful to you, than they have been to me,

AUGUSTUS, King.

Lipsick, Ap. 8.  
1707.

STANISLAUS answered,

SIR and BROTHER,

**T**HE correspondence of your majesty is a new obligation which I owe to the king of Sweden; I have a just sense of the compliments you make me upon my coming to the crown; and hope my subjects will have no cause to fail in their fidelity to me, as I shall observe the laws of the kingdom.

STANISLAUS, King of POLAND.

King Stanislaus came himself to Lipsick, where he one day met king Augustus; but the two princes bowed to each other without speaking. This was the height of Charles XIIth's triumph to see two kings in his court, one of whom had been crowned, and the other dethroned by his arms.

Augustus was farther obliged to order all the magistrates under him not to treat him as king of Poland any longer, and to efface the title he renounced out of the public prayers. He was less concerned about setting the

Sobieski's at liberty: though the princes upon coming out of prison refused to see him; but the sacrifice of Patkul was a circumstance of great mortification. The Czar on one side loudly demanded him back as his ambassador, and on the other the king of Sweden made terrible threats, if they refused to give him up to him. Patkul was then shut up in the castle of Konisting in Saxony. King Augustus thought he might find an expedient to satisfy Charles XII. and his own honour at the same time. He sent his guards to deliver up the unhappy prisoner to the Swedish troops; but sent before a secret order to the governor of Konisting to let him escape. Patkul's ill fortune defeated the care that was taken to save him. The governor knowing him to be very rich, would have had him bought his liberty. But the prisoner relying still upon the law of nations, and informed of the intentions of king Augustus, refused to pay what he thought he should obtain for nothing. During this interval, the guards appointed to seize upon him arrived, and immediately gave him up to four Swedish officers, who carried him strait to the general quarters at Alranstad, where he continued three months tied to a stake with a heavy chain of iron; and thence he was carried to Casimir.

Charles XII. forgetting that Patkul was the Czar's ambassador; and considering only that he was born his subject, ordered a council of war to pass sentence upon him with the utmost rigour. He was condemned to be broke alive and quartered. A chaplain came to let him know, that he was to die, without informing him of the manner of his punishment. At the same instant this man, who had braved death in so many battles, finding himself alone with a priest, and his courage no longer supported by glory or passion, the sole sources of human intrepidity, poured out a flood of tears, into the chaplain's bosom. He was engaged to a Saxon lady named Madam D'Einsiedel, who had all the advantages of birth, merit and beauty, and whom he had thoughts of marrying much about the same time that he was given up to punishment. He desired the chaplain to visit her in order to offer her some consolation, and to assure her that he died full of the tenderest regards for her. When he was led to the place of punish-



ment, and saw the wheels and stakes prepared for his execution, he fell into convulsions of terror, and threw himself into the arms of the minister, who embraced him, and covered him with his cloak, and wept over him. A Swedish officer then read aloud a paper, which contained the following words.

" This is to declare, that the express order of his majesty our most merciful Lord is, that this man, who is a traitor to his country, be broke upon the wheel and quartered, for the reparation of his crimes, and for an example to others; that every one may avoid treason, and faithfully serve his king." At the words *most merciful Lord*, Patkul cried out, " What mercy?" And at those of *traitor to his country*; " Alas! says he, I have served it too well." He received sixteen blows, and endured the longest and most dreadful tortures, that can be imagined. Thus died the unfortunate John Renold Patkul, ambassador and general to the emperor of Moscow.

Those who looked upon him only as a subject, who had rebelled against his king, said that he had deserved his death; but those who considered him as a Livonian, born in a province which had privileges to defend, and who recollected that he was driven from Livonia only for having supported those rights, called him the martyr to the liberty of his country. But all agreed that the title of ambassador to the Czar ought to have rendered his person sacred. Only the king of Sweden, brought up in the principle of arbitrary power, thought that he had done no more than an act of justice, whilst all Europe condemned his cruelty.

His members were quartered, and remained exposed upon gibbets, till 1713. when Augustus, having regained his throne, ordered these testimonies of the necessity he was reduced to at Altranstad to be collected together. They were brought to him in a box to Warsaw, in presence of the French ambassador. The king of Poland shewing the box to the minister, only said to him, *See the members of Patkul*, without any addition of blame or complaint, or without any of the persons present venturing to speak upon so tender and so mournful a subject.

Charles would have proceeded with the same severity against general Fleming, the favourite, and since the first minister of king Augustus. Fleming was born in the Swedish Pomerania; and though from his infancy he had been attached to the elector of Saxony, Charles looked upon him always as his subject, and had long demanded him to be given up to him. Fleming when he saw his master not in a condition to refuse any thing, fled into Prussia, from whence he wrote a letter to king Stanislaus, with whom he had been acquainted in Poland, to beg of him, that he would prevail with the king of Sweden to lay aside his resentments against him. Stanislaus applied in his favour with warmth, and for eight days successively repeated his entreaties, without any effect; at last he almost threw himself at the feet of Charles, who said to him; "My brother, at your request I grant you his life, but remember, you will one day repent of what you have done." And indeed Fleming did afterwards serve his master against Stanislaus, much beyond his duty obliged him to.

About the same time one Paikel, a Livonian, and an officer in the Saxon troops, who was taken prisoner in the field, was condemned at Stockholm by a decree of the senate; but his sentence was only to lose his head. This difference of punishments in the same case shewed too much, that Charles, in putting Patkul to so cruel a death, intended more to revenge himself than to punish him. However, Paikel, after his condemnation, proposed to the senate, to let the king into the secret of making gold, in case he would pardon him. He made the experiment in prison in presence of colonel Hamilton and the magistrates of the town; and, whether it was that he had in reality discovered any useful art, or whether he had found out none but that of deceiving plausibly, which seems most probable, they carried the gold which was found at the bottom of the crucible to the mint at Stockholm, and made a report so juridically, and which appeared so important, that the queen, grandmother of Charles, ordered the execution to be suspended, till the king being informed of this particularity should send his orders to Stockholm.

The king made answer, "That he had refused the

"pardon of the criminal to the entreaties of his friends, "and he never would grant that to interest, which he "had denied to friendship." This inflexibility had something in it very heroical in a prince, especially as he thought the secret possible. When it was told king Augustus, he said, "He did not wonder that the king of "Sweden had so much indifference for the philosophers "stone, since he had found it in Saxony."

When the Czar had notice of the strange peace that king Augustus, notwithstanding their treaties, had concluded at Alranstad; and that Patkul his ambassador and plenipotentiary had been given up to the king of Sweden in contempt of the laws of nations, he spread his complaints through all the courts of Europe; he wrote to the emperor of Germany, to the queen of England, and to the states general of the united provinces; he called the melancholy necessity, to which Augustus yielded, by the names of cowardice and treachery; he conjured all these powers to interpose their mediation for the sending back of his ambassador, and to prevent the affront which in his person would be offered to all crowned heads; he pressed them by the motive of their honour not to descend so low as to become guarantees for the peace of Alranstad, which Charles XII. would force upon them by threatening. These letters had no other effect, than to shew the power of the king of Sweden still more. The emperor, England, and Holland, were then engaged in a destructive war against France; and they did not judge it convenient to exasperate Charles XII. by the refusal of the vain ceremony of being guarantees to a treaty. As to the unfortunate Patkul, not one power interposed its good offices in his behalf; which shews how little a subject ought to rely on princes.

It was proposed in the Czar's council to make retaliation by treating the Swedish officers, who were prisoners at Moscow, in the same manner. But the Czar would not consent to a barbarity, which would have been attended with such fatal consequence; since there were more Moscovites prisoners in Sweden, than Swedes in Moscow.

He sought for a more advantageous revenge. The main body of his enemies army lay idle in Saxony. Le-

venhaupt, the king of Sweden's general, who was left in Poland with about twenty thousand men, was not able to guard the passes in a country without forts and full of factions. Stanislaus was in the camp of Charles XII. The emperor of Moscovy seizes upon this conjuncture and re-enters Poland with above sixty thousand men; he divides them into several bodies, and marches with a flying camp as far as Leopold, which was not garrison'd by the Swedes. All the towns of Poland are his, who appears before their gates at the head of an army. He caused an assembly to be called together at Leopold, not much unlike that, which had dethroned Augustus at Warsaw.

Poland had then two primates, as well as two kings, the one nominated by Augustus, the other by Stanislaus. The primate nominated by Augustus summoned the assembly of Leopold, and drew thither all those, whom this unfortunate prince had abandoned by the peace of Alranstad, with such as the Czar's money had brought over to his interest, and it was proposed to elect a new king. So that Poland was upon the point of having three kings at a time without being able to say which was the true one.

During the conferences of Leopold, the Czar, united in interests with the emperor of Germany through the common fear they had of the king of Sweden, secretly obtained of him a number of German officers. These came daily to make a considerable augmentation in his forces, by bringing with them experience and discipline. He engaged them to his service by great rewards; and for the better encouragement of his own troops, he gave his picture set round with diamonds to all the general officers and colonels, who had fought at the battle of Calish; the lower officers had medals of gold, and every private soldier a medal of silver. These monuments of the victory at Calish were all struck in his new city of Petersburg, where arts and sciences flourished in proportion as he trained up his troops to a sense of emulation and glory.

The confusion, multiplicity of factions, and continual ravages prevailing in Poland, hindered the diet of Leopold from coming to any resolution, for which reason, the Czar transferred it to Lublin. But the change of place did

not lessen the disorders and uncertainty, which all mankind were in; and the assembly satisfied themselves with neither owning Augustus, who had abdicated, nor Stanislaus, who had been elected against their inclinations; but they were neither sufficiently united, nor resolute enough to name another king. During these fruitless deliberations, the party of the princes Sapieha, that of Oginskiy, those who held in secret for king Augustus, and the new subjects of Stanislaus, all made war upon one another, ravaged each others estates, and finished the ruin of their country. The Swedish troops commanded by Levenhaup, of which one part lay in Livonia, another in Lithuania, and a third in Poland, were daily in pursuit of the Moscovite troops, and set fire to every thing that opposed Stanislaus. The Moscovites equally ruined friends and enemies, and nothing was to be seen but towns in ashes, and wandering troops of Poles, deprived of all their substance, who equally hated their two kings, and Charles XII. and the Czar.

King Stanislaus set out from Altranstad on the 15th of July 1707, with general Renschild, sixteen Swedish regiments, and great sums of money, to appease all these troubles in Poland, and make himself peaceably owned. He was acknowledged wherever he passed; the discipline of his troops, which the better exposed the barbarity of the Moscovites, gained him the people's inclinations; his extreme affability re-united to him almost all the factions, in proportion as it was known; and his money procured him the greatest part of the army of the crown. The Czar fearing he should want provisions in a country, which his troops had laid desolate, retired into Lithuania, where he had appointed the rendezvous of the several branches of his army, and established magazines. This retreat left king Stanislaus in the peaceable possession of almost all Poland.

The only one, who then troubled him in his dominions, was count Siniausky, grand general of the crown, of the nomination of Augustus. He was a person of very great abilities, and as much ambition, and was at the head of a third party. He neither owned Augustus nor Stanislaus, and after having used his utmost efforts to make



himself elected, he was contented to be head of a party, as he could not be king. The troops of the crown, who continued under his command, had scarce any other pay, besides the liberty of ravaging their own country with impunity. And all who had suffered from their plunder, or were apprehensive of it, presently submitted to Stanislaus, whose power was daily confirmed.

The king of Sweden was then receiving ambassadors in his camp at Alranstad, from almost all the princes in Christendom. Some desired him to quit the dominions of the empire, and others pressed him to turn his arms against the emperor; and it was then a current report, that he designed to join with France, in depressing the house of Austria. Amongst these ambassadors was the famous John duke of Marlborough, sent by Anne queen of Great Britain. This man who never laid siege to a town which he did not take, nor fought a battle which he did not gain, was at St. James's a perfect courtier, the head of a party in parliament, and in foreign countries the most able negotiator of his time; he did France as much mischief by his understanding, as by his arms. And Fagel, secretary of the states general, a man of very great merit, has been heard to say, that more than once the states general having resolved to oppose what the duke of Marlborough was to lay before them; the duke came, spoke to them in French, in which language he expressed himself very ill, and brought them all into his sentiments.

In conjunction with prince Eugene, the companion of his victories, and Heinsius the grand pensioner of Holland, he supported all the weight of the enterprizes of the allies against France. He knew that Charles was exasperated against the empire and the emperor; that he was secretly solicited by the French; and that if this conqueror should join himself to Lewis XIV. the allies would be undone.

'Tis true, Charles had given his word in 1700. not to intermeddle in the war of Lewis XIV. with the allies. But the duke of Marlborough did not believe that any prince would be so great a slave to his word, as not to sacrifice it to his grandeur and interest. He therefore set

out from the Hague with a design to sound the intentions of the king of Sweden.

As soon as he was arrived at Lipsick, where Charles then was, he applied himself secretly, not to count Piper the first minister, but to baron Goerts, who began to share the king's confidence with Piper. He told Goerts, that the design of the allies was very shortly to propose to the king of Sweden to be a second time mediator between them and France. He said this in hopes of discovering by Goerts's answer the king's intentions, and because he chose much rather to have Charles for an arbitrator than an enemy. At last he had his public audience at Lipsick.

Upon his first address to the king, he told him in French that he should think himself happy, if he could be taught under his command, what he yet wanted to know in the art of war. He then had a private audience of an hour long, in which the king spoke in German, and the duke in French; the duke who was never in haste to make propositions, and had learnt by a long course of experience the art of penetrating into the sentiments of mankind, and finding out the secret connexion between their inmost thoughts and their actions, gestures, and discourse, fixed his eyes attentively upon the king. When he spoke to him of war in general, he thought he perceived in his majesty a natural aversion towards France, and observed that he was pleased when he talked of the conquests of the allies. He mentioned the Czar to him, and took notice that his eyes always kindled at his name, notwithstanding the moderation of the conference; and he farther remarked, that a map of Moscovy lay before him upon the table. He wanted no more to determine him in his judgment, that the real design of the king of Sweden and his sole ambition were to dethrone the Czar, as he had already done the king of Poland. He understood that he had no other views by continuing in Saxony, than to impose by that means certain hard laws upon the emperor of Germany. But he knew that the emperor would comply with them, and that thus matters would be easily made up. He left Charles XII. to his natural inclination; and being satisfied with having discovered his intentions, he made him no kind of proposal.

As few negotiations are concluded without money, and ministers are sometimes seen to sell the hatred or favours of their masters, 'tis believed throughout all Europe, that the duke of Marlborough's success with the king of Sweden was obtained by a large sum of money, opportunely given to count Piper, and the count is reflected upon for it to this day. For my own part, after having traced this report to its source, I have been informed that Piper received a small present from the emperor by the hands of count Wratislau, with the consent of the king his master, and nothing from the duke of Marlborough. And farther, count Piper, who was sensible that the proceedings of his king might one day be imputed to him, if they proved unfortunate; sent his advice sealed up to the senate of Sweden, to be opened after his death. His opinion was, that Charles should first firmly establish king Stanislaus upon the crown of Poland, and then accept of the mediation between France and the allies, before he went to engage himself in Moscow. 'Tis true indeed, that Piper might at the same time advise his master to that dangerous expedition, and be willing to clear himself of it in the eyes of posterity; but it is as certain that Charles was obstinately bent upon dethroning the emperor of Russia, that he then took counsel of no body, nor had any occasion for count Piper's instigations to stir him up to revenge against Peter Alexiowitz, which he had so long thirsted after. And lastly, what absolutely vindicates the minister from this imputation, is the honour which Charles XII. paid to his memory a long time after; when having learned that Piper was dead in Russia, he caused his body to be transported to Stockholm, and buried with great pomp and magnificence at his own expence.

The king, who had not as yet experienced ill fortune, or even any interruption of his successes, thought that one year would be sufficient for dethroning the Czar, and that then he might return and raise himself by his own power to the dignity of arbiter of Europe; but he had a mind first to bring down the spirit of the emperor of Germany.

Count Zobor, the emperor's chamberlain, had spoke

very disrespectfully of the king of Sweden, in the presence of the Swedish ambassador at Vienna. The emperor had made reparation, though much against his will, by banishing the count. But this would not satisfy the king of Sweden; he insisted upon the delivery of count Zobor into his hands. The pride of the court of Vienna was obliged to stoop, and give up the count to the king, who sent him back after having kept him some time a prisoner at Stettin.

He farther demanded, in opposition to all the laws of nations, that they should deliver up to him fifteen hundred unfortunate Moscovites, who having escaped his arms had fled into the emperor's dominions. And the court of Vienna must have consented to this extravagant demand, and they all had been given up to the enemy, if the Russian envoy at Vienna had not artfully provided for their escape, by different roads.

The third and last of his demands was the most considerable. He declared himself protector of the emperor's Protestant subjects in Silesia, a province belonging to the house of Austria, and not to the empire. And it was his will, that the emperor should grant them liberties and privileges, which had been established by the treaties of Westphalia, but were extinguished, or at least eluded, by those of Ryfwick. The emperor, who wanted nothing so much as to get rid of so dangerous a neighbour, still complied, and granted him all that he desired. The Lutherans had above an hundred churches in Silesia, which the Roman Catholicks were obliged to give up to them by this treaty; but many of these concessions, which the king of Sweden's fortune procured to them, were taken from them as soon as ever he was out of a condition to impose laws.

The emperor, who was forced to make these concessions and absolutely complied with the will of Charles XII. was named Joseph, the eldest son of Leopold, and brother to the wise emperor Charles VI. who succeeded him. The pope's nuncio, who then resided in his court, reproached him very severely, that he, who was a Roman Catholick, should thus give up the interest of his own religion, in favour of heretics. " 'Tis well for you," an-

swered the emperor smiling, "that the king of Sweden did not propose to make me a Lutheran; for, if he had, I don't know what I should have done."

Count Wratislau, his ambassador with Charles XII. brought the treaty to Lipsick in favour of the Silesians, signed by his master's own hand. Charles then said, he was satisfied, and was the emperor's very good friend. However, he was much disgusted at the opposition he had found from Rome upon every occasion. He looked with the utmost contempt upon the weakness of that court, which having one half of Europe for its irreconcilable enemy, is always in distrust of the other, and supports its credit only by its skill in negotiations. In the mean time he meditated revenge. He told count Wratislau, that the Swedes had formerly conquered Rome, and had not degenerated like that city. And he let the pope know, that he would one day demand back the effects which queen Christina had left at Rome. One cannot tell, how far this young conqueror would have carried his resentments and his arms, if fortune had prospered his designs. Nothing then appeared impossible to him. He had even sent privately several officers into Asia, and as far as Egypt, to take the plan of the towns, and inform him of the strength of those countries. 'Tis certain that if any one could have overturned the empire of the Persians and Turks, and then have passed into Italy, it was Charles XII. He was as young as Alexander, as much a soldier, and as enterprising; but more indefatigable, more robust, and more virtuous; and the Swedes perhaps exceeded the Macedonians: but such projects, which are looked upon as divine, when attended with success, are treated as chimaera's, when they want it.

At last, all difficulties being removed, and whatever he had a mind to be executed; after having humbled the emperor, given laws in the empire, protected the Lutheran religion in the midst of Roman Catholics, dethroned one king, crowned another, and seen himself the terror of all the princes round him, he prepared for his departure. The pleasures of Saxony, where he had lain idle a full year, had made no alteration in his manner of living. He mounted on horseback three times a day, rose at four in



the morning, dressed himself alone, drank no wine, sat at table but one quarter of an hour, exercised his troops every day, and knew no other pleasure, but that of making Europe tremble.

The Swedes did not yet know, whither their king would lead them; only it was suspected in the army, that he might go to Moscow. Some days before his departure, he ordered the grand mareschal of his household to give him in writing the rout from Lipsick. . . . He paused a while at that word, and that the mareschal might have no suspicion of his projects, he added smiling, . . . to all the capital cities of Europe. The mareschal brought him a list of them all, and at the head of them had affected to put in great letters, *The road from Lipsick to Stockholm*. The generality of the Swedes wished only to return thither, but the king was far from the thought of carrying them back into their own country. "I see, Sir, says he, "whither you would lead me, but we shall not return to "Stockholm so soon."

The army was already upon their march, and passed near Dresden. Charles was at their head, and riding according to his custom about a quarter or half a mile before his guards, they lost sight of him all at once, and some of the officers spurred on their horses to see where he was; but with all their enquiry they could not find him. The whole army took the alarm in a moment. They made a halt, and the generals met together; and whilst they were in great consternation, they learnt at last from a Saxon, who was passing by, what was become of him.

He had a mind, as he passed so near Dresden, to make a visit to king Augustus. He entered the town on horseback, attended by three or four general officers, and went directly to alight at the palace. He was got as far as the elector's apartment, before it was known that he was in the town. General Fleming having seen the king of Sweden at a distance, had only time to run and inform his master. All that could be done upon such an occasion, was presented to the idea of the minister, who laid it before Augustus; but Charles entered the chamber in his boots, before Augustus had time to recover from his sur-

prize. He was then sick and in a night-gown, but dressed himself presently. Charles breakfasted with him as a traveller, who came to take leave of his friend, and then he expressed his desire of viewing the fortifications. During the little time that was taken up in walking round them, a Livonian condemned in Sweden, who served in the troops of Saxony, thought he could never have a more favourable opportunity of obtaining pardon, and begged of king Augustus to ask it of Charles; being fully assured that his majesty could not refuse so slight a request to a prince, from whom he had taken a crown, and in whose power he then was. Augustus was easily prevailed upon to undertake it. He stood at a little distance from the king of Sweden, and was discoursing with Hoord a Swedish general. "I believe," says he smiling, "that your majesty will not refuse me." "You don't know him," replies general Hoord, "he will rather refuse you here than any where else." Augustus notwithstanding asked a pardon for the Livonian of the king in pressing terms; and Charles denied him in such a manner, that he did not think fit to ask it a second time. After having passed some hours in this odd kind of visit, he embraced king Augustus, and took his leave. Upon returning to his army he found all his generals assembled in a council of war, and asked the reason. General Renschild told him, they had determined to besiege Dresden, in case his majesty had been detained a prisoner. "Right," says the king, "they durst not, they durst not." The next morning, upon the news that king Augustus held an extraordinary council at Dresden: "You see," says Renschild, "they are deliberating upon what they should have done yesterday." A few days after this event Renschild coming to wait upon the king spoke to him with astonishment of his adventure at Dresden. I confided in my good fortune, said Charles, but I have once seen the moment that might have been a little unfavourable to me. Fleming had no great inclination that I should leave Dresden so soon.

*The End of the Third Book.*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK IV.

The CONTENTS.

*Charles leaves Saxony; pursues the Czar; advances far into Ukrania; his losses, wound, and the battle of Pultowa; the consequences of that battle; Charles reduced to a necessity of flying into Turkey, his reception in Bessarabia.*

CHARLES at last took leave of Saxony in September 1707, followed by an army of three and forty thousand men, formerly covered with steel, but then shining with gold and silver, and enriched with the spoils of Poland and Saxony. Every soldier carried with him fifty crowns in ready money; all the regiments were not only complete, but in every company there were several supernumeraries, who waited for vacant places. Besides this army, count Levenhaup, one of his best generals, waited for him in Poland with twenty thousand men; and he had besides another army of fifteen thousand in Finland; and fresh recruits were coming to him from Sweden. With all these forces it was not doubted but he must dethrone the Czar.

The emperor of Moscovy was then in Lithuania, employed in keeping up the spirits of a party, which king Augustus seemed to have renounced. His troops, divided into several bodies, fled on all sides upon the first report

of the king of Sweden's approach. He had himself advised all his generals never to wait for the coming up of this conqueror with unequal force.

The king of Sweden in the midst of his victorious march received a solemn embassy from the Turks. The ambassador had his audience in count Piper's quarters; for 'twas there always that ceremonies of pomp were performed. He supported the dignity of his master by a magnificent appearance; and the king, who was always worse lodged, worse served, and more plainly clad than the meanest officer in his army, would often say that his palace was Piper's quarters. The Turkish ambassador presented Charles with an hundred Swedish soldiers; who having been taken by the Colmouks, sold in Turkey, and redeemed by the grand Seignior, were sent by him to the king as the most agreeable present he could make him; not that the Ottoman pride pretended to pay homage to the glory of Charles XII. but because the sultan, a natural enemy to the emperors of Moscovy and Germany, was desirous of strengthening himself against them by the friendship of Sweden, and the alliance of Poland. The ambassador complimented Stanislaus upon his advancement to the crown; and thus he was owned as king in a very little time by Germany, France, England, Spain, and Turkey. There remained only the pope, who before he acknowledged him was willing to wait, till time had settled the crown upon his head, which a turn of fortune might strike off.

Charles had scarce given audience to the ambassador of the Ottoman Porte, before he began his march in search of the Moscovites.

The Czar had left Poland, and returned thither above twenty times during the course of the war. The country lying open on all sides, and having no strong holds to cut off the retreat of an army, left the Moscovites the liberty of appearing often again in the very place where they had been beaten; and even allowed them to penetrate as far into the country as the conqueror. Whilst Charles was in Saxony, the Czar had advanced as far as Leopold, which lies on the southern extremity of Poland. He was

then towards the north at Grodno in Lithuania about a hundred leagues from Leopold.

Charles left Stanislaus in Poland with ten thousand Swedes and his new subjects to assist him in the preservation of his kingdom, against his foreign and domestic enemies; as for his own part, he marched at the head of his horse amidst ice and snow towards Grodno in the month of January, 1708.

He had already passed the Niemen within two leagues of the town, before the Czar knew any thing of his march. Upon the first news that the Swedes were coming, the Czar leaves the town by the north-gate, and Charles enters by the south. The king had with him but six hundred of his guards, the rest not being able to follow him; and the Czar fled with above two thousand men, upon supposition that a whole army was entering into Grodno; but he learnt that very day from a Polish deserter, that he had quitted the place to no more than six hundred men, and that the body of the enemy's army was still above five leagues distant. He lost no time, but sent a detachment of fifteen hundred horse in the evening to surprise the king of Sweden in the town. The fifteen hundred Moscovites, assisted by the darkness of the night, advanced as far as the first Swedish guard without being known. This guard consisted of thirty men; and they alone sustained the attack of fifteen hundred for half a quarter of an hour. The king who lay at the other end of the town came up presently with his six hundred guards; and the Moscovites fled with precipitation. His army were not long without joining him, nor he without pursuing the enemy. All the Moscovite troops who were dispersed in Lithuania retired in haste eastward into the palatinate of Minsky, near the frontiers of Moscovy, where their rendezvous was appointed. The Swedes, whom the king also divided into several bodies, did not cease to pursue them for above thirty leagues of their way. Those who fled and those who pursued, made excessive marches almost every day, though in the midst of winter. All seasons had been long equal to the soldiers of Charles and of the Czar; the sole terror, which the name of Charles



carried with it, then made the difference between the Moscovites and the Swedes.

From Grodno to the Boristhenes eastward lye nothing but morasses, deserts, mountains, and immense forests; in such places as are cultivated there was no provision to be found; the country people buried all their grain under ground, and whatever else could be preserved there. In order to discover these subterraneous magazines, they were obliged to sound the earth with long poles pointed with iron. The Moscovites and Swedes served themselves with these provisions by turns; but they were not always found, nor did they prove sufficient, when they were discovered.

The king of Sweden, who had foreseen these difficulties, had provided biscuit for the subsistence of his army, so that nothing stopped him in his march. After he had crossed the forest of Minsky where his men were obliged every moment to cut down trees to make way for his troops and baggage, he found himself on the 25th of June, 1708 before the river Berezhine, over against Borisslow.

The Czar had got together the best part of his troops in that place and intrenched himself to advantage. His design was to hinder the Swedes from passing the river. Charles posted some of his regiments on the banks of the Berezhine, directly against Borisslow, as though he meant to attempt the passage in sight of the enemy. At the same time he leads his army about three leagues up the river, throws a bridge over it, cuts his way through a body of three thousand men, who defended that post, and marches to the enemy without stopping. The Moscovites did not wait however for his coming up, but immediately decamped, and retreated towards the Boristhenes, spoiling all the roads, and spreading destruction wherever they passed, that by these means at least they might retard the progress of the Swedes.

Charles surmounted all difficulties, advancing still towards the Boristhenes. He met with twenty thousand Moscovites in his way entrenched in a place named Hollosin, behind a morass, which could not be come at without passing a river. Charles did not wait for the assault till the rest of his infantry came up, but threw himself into the water at the head of his foot-guards, and cross-

fed the river and the morafs, with the water fometimes above his foulders. Whilft he thus marched againft the enemy, he ordered his horfe to pafs round the morafs, and fall upon them in flank. The Mofcovites in amaze, that no barrier could defend them, were at the fame time routed by the king on foot, and by the Swedifh horfe.

The horfe having made their way through the enemy joined the king in the midft of the battle. He then mounted on horfe-back, but fome time after finding a young Swedifh gentleman, named Gullenftiern, whom he very much efteemed, wounded in the field, and unable to march, he obliged him to take his horfe, and continued to command on foot at the head of his infantry. Of all the battles he had ever fought, this in all probability was the moft glorious, that wherein he was expofed to the moft dangers, and where he fhewed the greateft abilities. The memory of it is preferved by a medal, with this infcription on one fide, SYLVAE, PALUDES, AGGERES, HOSTES VICTI; and on the other, VICTRICES COPIAS ALIUM LATURUS IN ORBEM.

The Mofcovites, thus obliged to fly, repaffed the Borifthenes, which feparates the dominions of Poland from their own country. Charles loft no time in the purfuit, he croffed that great river after them at Mohilou, the laft town in Poland, which fometimes belongs to the Czar, and fometimes to the Poles, according to the common fate of frontier places.

The Czar, thus feeing his empire, in which he was giving birth to arts and trade, become a prey to a war, which in a little time might ruin all his projects, and perhaps take him from his throne, was inclined to a peace, and even ventured fome propofals by a Polish gentleman, whom he fent to the Swedifh army. Charles XII. who had not been ufed to grant peace to his enemies, but in their capital cities, only answered, *I will treat with the Czar at Mofcow*. When this haughty answer was reported to the Czar, “ My brother Charles, fays he, ftill affects to act the Alexander, but I flatter myfelf he will not find a Darius in me.”

About thirty leagues northward from Mohilou, the place where the king paffed the Borifthenes, along the

river, and still upon the frontiers of Poland and Moscovy, is situate the country of Smolensko, in which lies the great road from Poland to Moscow. This way the Czar retreated, and the king followed by long marches; and so close, that part of the rear-guard of the Moscovites was frequently engaged with the dragoons of the Swedish vanguard. The latter had generally the advantage; but they weakened themselves even by conquering in these small skirmishes, which were never decisive, and in which they always lost abundance of men.

On the 22d of September, in this year 1708, the king attacked a body of ten thousand horse and six thousand Calmouks near Smolensko. These Calmouks are Tartars, living between the kingdom of Astracan, which is part of the Czar's dominions, and that of Samarcande, belonging to the Usbeck Tartars, and the country of Timur, which is known by the name of Tamerlane. The country of the Calmouks extends eastward to the mountains, which separates the Mogul from the western part of Asia. Those who inhabit near Astracan are tributary to the Czar; he pretends to an absolute dominion over them, but their wandering way of life hinders him from enjoying it, and obliges him to deal with them, as the grand Seignior with the Arabs, sometimes bearing with their robberies, and at other times punishing them. There are always some of these Calmouks in the troops of Moscovy, and the Czar had reduced even them to discipline, like the rest of his soldiers.

The king fell upon this army with only six regiments of horse, and four thousand foot; broke their ranks upon the first onset at the head of his Ostrogothick regiment, and forced the enemy to retreat. He advanced upon them through rough and hollow ways, where the Calmouks lay hid; they then appeared again, and threw themselves between the regiment where the king was fighting and the rest of the Swedish army. The Moscovites and Calmouks in an instant surrounded this regiment, and made their way quite up to his majesty. They killed two Aides de Camp, who fought near his person. The king's horse was slain under him; and as one of his equeries was presenting him another, both the

equery and horse were struck dead upon the spot. Charles fought on foot, encircled by some of his officers, who immediately flew to relieve him by surrounding him.

Several of them were taken, wounded or slain, or carried off to a distance from the king by the multitude that fell upon him, so that only five men were left about him. He was quite spent with fatigue, having killed above a dozen of the enemy with his own hand, without receiving so much as one wound, by that inexpressible good fortune, which till then had ever attended him, and upon which he still relied. At last colonel Dardoff forced his way through the Calmouks with a single company of his regiment, and came time enough to disengage the king. The rest of the Swedes put the Tartars to the sword. The army recovered its ranks, Charles mounted his horse, and fatigued as he was, pursued the Moscovites two leagues.

The conqueror was still in the great road to the capital of Moscovy. From Smolensko, near which this battle was fought, to Moscow, are about a hundred French leagues; and the roads in themselves not worse than those, through which the Swedes had already passed; but they had information, that the Czar had not only made all these roads impassable, either by laying such parts of them under water, as lay near the marshes, or by digging very deep ditches at certain distances, or by covering the way with the wood of whole forests which his soldiers had cut down; but also they learn'd, that he had set fire to all the villages, both on the right side, and the left. The Winter was coming on, and there was little appearance of making any speedy advances into the country, and none of subsisting there; and the whole body of the Moscovite forces might unexpectedly fall upon the king of Sweden through by-ways, which he was not acquainted with.

Charles having made a review of his whole army, and taken an account of their provisions, found that he had not a sufficient quantity to subsist them for fifteen days. General Levenhaup, who was appointed to bring him a supply with a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men, was not yet come up; he therefore resolved to quit the road to Moscow, and turn to the south towards Ukrania, into the country

of the Cosaques, situate between the lesser Tartary, Poland and Moscovy. This country extends about a hundred French leagues from the south to the north, and almost as many from the east to the west. 'Tis divided into two parts, which are very near equal, by the Boristhenes, which runs cross from the north-west to the south-east: and the principal town is Bathurin upon the little river Sem. The most northern part of Ukania is cultivated and rich; the most southern situate in the 48th degree, is one of the most fertile countries in the world, and the most desolate; the calamitous government still suppressing all the efforts of bounteous nature to make the inhabitants happy. The people of those cantons that lye near the lesser Tartary neither plant nor sow, lest the Tartars of Bougiac, Precop, and Moldavia, who subsist by robbery, should carry off their harvest.

Ukania has always aspired to be free; but being surrounded by Moscovy, the dominions of the grand Seignior, and Poland, it has ever been obliged to seek for a protector, and consequently a master, in one of those three states. 'Twas first put under the protection of Poland, which carried it over them with too high a hand; they then applied to the Moscovite, who governed them as slaves, as much as possible. The Ukanians had the privilege at first of chusing a prince under the name of general, but they were soon after deprived of this right, and their general was nominated by the court of Moscow.

The station was then filled by a Polish gentleman, named Mazeppa, born in the palatinate of Podolia. He had been brought up a page to king John Casimir, and had received some tincture of polite learning in his court. An intrigue he had in his youth with the lady of a Polish gentleman being discovered, the husband caused him to be whipt, and then tied naked upon a wild horse, and sent to ramble in that condition. The horse, which had been brought out of Ukania returned into his own country, and carried Mazeppa with him half killed with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country people gave him relief, he lived a long time among them, and signalized himself in several excursions against the Tartars. The superiority of his understanding made him very considerable



among the Cossques, and his reputation daily encreasing obliged the Czar to make him prince of Ukrania.

One day as he sat at table with the Czar at Moscow, the emperor proposed to him to discipline the Cossques, and render those people more dependent. Mazeppa answered that the situation of Ukrania, and the genius of the nation, were obstacles not to be surmounted. The Czar, who was somewhat-over heated with wine, and did not always command his passion, called him traitor, and threatened to have him empaled.

Mazeppa, upon his return into Ukrania, laid the scheme of a revolt. The Swedish army, which appeared soon after upon the frontiers, opened him an easy way to it; and he took a resolution of becoming independent, and raising himself a powerful kingdom out of Ukrania, and the ruins of the Russian empire. He was a person of great courage, of an enterprising genius, and indefatigable labour; he entered into a secret league with the king of Sweden to hasten the downfall of the Czar, and make his own advantage of it.

The king appointed the rendezvous near the river Desna. Mazeppa promised to meet him there with thirty thousand men, proper ammunition and provisions, and all his treasures, which were immense. The Swedish army therefore was ordered to march towards that side of the country to the great astonishment of all the officers, who knew nothing of the king's treaty with the Cossques. Charles sent orders to Levenhaup to bring up his troops and provisions with all speed into Ukrania, where he designed to pass the Winter, that having secured that country to himself, he might conquer Moscovy the next Spring; and in the mean time he advanced towards the river Desna, which falls into the Boristhenes at Kiou.

The obstacles they had hitherto encountered in their march were trifles to those they met with in this new road. They were obliged to cross a forest full fifty leagues broad, and full of marshes. General Lagercron, who marched before with five thousand men and pioneers, led the army thirty leagues eastward out of the right way. And they had marched four days, before the king discovered the mistake. With difficulty they struck into the

right road again, but left almost all their artillery and waggon<sup>s</sup> behind, which were either stuck fast, or quite sunk in the mud.

They marched for twelve days in this painful and laborious manner, till they had eaten up the little biscuit that was left, and then they arrived quite spent with hunger and fatigue upon the banks of the Desna, in the place where Mazeppa had appointed to meet them; but instead of the prince, they found a body of Moscovites advancing towards the other side of the river. The king was very much astonished, but resolved immediately to pass the Desna, and attack the enemy. The banks of the river were so steep, that they were obliged to let the soldiers down with cords; and they crossed it according to their usual manner, some by swimming, and others on floats hastily made. The body of Moscovites, which arrived at the same time, were not above eight thousand men; so that they made but small resistance, and this obstacle was also surmounted.

Charles advanced farther into this wretched country, uncertain of his road and Mazeppa's fidelity. Mazeppa appeared at last, but rather as a fugitive than a powerful ally. The Moscovites had discovered and prevented his designs. They had fallen upon the Cosaques and cut them in pieces; his principal friends were taken sword in hand, and thirty of them had been broke upon the wheel. His towns were laid in ashes, his treasures plundered, the provisions he was preparing for the king of Sweden seized; and he was scarce able to escape himself with six thousand men, and some few horses loaden with gold and silver. However, he gave the king hopes of supporting him by his intelligences in this unknown country, and the affection of all the Cosaques, who, enraged against the Moscovites, came in troops to the camp, and brought them provisions.

Charles hoped at least that general Levenhaup would come and repair this ill fortune. He was to bring with him about fifteen thousand Swedes, which were more valuable than a hundred thousand Cosaques, with provisions of ammunition and victual. He arrived at last, but almost in the same condition as Mazeppa.

He had already passed the Boristhenes above Mohilou, and advanced about twenty leagues farther on the road to Ukrania. He brought the king a convoy of eight thousand waggons, with the money he had raised in Lithuania, and as he was upon his march. Upon coming up towards Lefno, near the place where the rivers of Pronia and Sossa join to disembogue themselves far below into the Boristhenes, the Czar appeared at the head of fifty thousand men.

The Swedish general, who had not quite sixteen thousand, resolved not to entrench. Their many victories, had inspired the Swedes with so much confidence, that they never enquired after the number of the enemy, but only where they lay. Levenhaup therefore marched against them, without hesitation on the seventh of October 1708, in the afternoon. Upon the first assault they killed fifteen hundred Moscovites. The Czar's army fell into confusion, and fled on all sides; and the emperor of Russia was upon the point of seeing himself entirely defeated. He perceived that the safety of his dominions depended upon the action of that day, and that he was utterly undone, if Levenhaup joined the king of Sweden with a victorious army.

As soon as he saw his troops begin to fall back, he ran to the rear-guard, where the Cosaques and Calmouks were posted: "I charge you, says he, to fire upon every man that runs away, and even to kill me, if I should be so cowardly, as to turn my back." From thence he turned to the van-guard, rallied his troops in person, assisted by prince Menzicof, and prince Gallicfin. Levenhaup, who had pressing orders to join his master chose rather to continue on his march than renew the fight, thinking he had done enough to discourage the enemy from pursuing.

At eleven the next morning the Czar attacked him near a morass and drew out his army at length, that he might surround him. The Swedes faced about, and the fight lasted two hours with equal resolution. The Moscovites lost three times as many men, but still kept their ground, and the victory was undecided.

At four in the afternoon general Baver brought the Czar

a reinforcement of troops. The battle was then renewed for the third time, with more fury and eagerness than ever, and lasted till night came on. At last numbers carried it. The Swedes were broken, routed, and driven as far as to their baggage. Levenhaup rallied his troops behind his waggons, and though the Swedes were conquered, they did not fly. They were about nine thousand in number, and not a single man of them ran away; and the general drew them up as easily in order of battle, as tho' they had never been beaten.

The Czar on the other side passed the night under arms, and commanded his officers under pain of being cashiered, and his soldiers under pain of death, not to stir for plunder.

The next morning at day-break he ordered a fresh assault. Levenhaup had retired to an advantageous ground at some miles distance, after having nailed down part of his cannon, and set fire to his waggons.

The Moscovites came time enough to hinder the whole convoy from being consumed in the flames; they seized upon six thousand waggons, which they saved. The Czar, who was desirous of completing the defeat of the Swedes, sent general Flug to fall upon them again the fifth time: and the general offered them an honourable capitulation. Levenhaup refused it, and the fifth battle was as bloody as any of the former. Of the nine thousand soldiers he had left, he lost one half, and the other remained unbroken. At last night coming on, Levenhaup, after having sustained five battles against fifty thousand men, swam over the Sossa, followed by the five thousand men he had left alive, and the wounded were carried over on floats. The Czar lost above twenty thousand Moscovites in these five engagements, in which he had the glory of conquering the Swedes, and Levenhaup the reputation of disputing the victory for three days, and of retreating without being broken at last. He then came to his masters camp with the honour of having made so good a defence, but bringing with him neither ammunition nor army.

King Stanislaus would have been glad to have joined Charles at the same time, but the Moscovites who had

conquered Levenhaup, lay in his way, and Siniausky employed him enough in Poland.

The king of Sweden thus found himself without provisions or communication with Poland, surrounded with enemies in the midst of a country, where he had scarce any refuge but his fortitude of mind.

In this extremity the memorable winter of 1709. which was still more terrible in those frontiers of Europe, than it was in France, carried off part of his army. Charles resolved to brave the seasons, as he had done his enemies, and ventured to make long marches with his troops during the excessive severity of the weather. 'Twas in one of these marches that two thousand of his men were frozen to death almost before his eyes. The horsemen had no boots, and the foot were without shoes, and almost without cloaths. They were forced to make stockings of the skins of beasts, in the best manner they could. They often wanted bread. They were obliged to throw the best part of their cannon into quagmires and rivers, for want of horses to draw them along. So that this once flourishing army was reduced to four and twenty thousand men ready to perish for hunger. They no longer received news from Sweden, nor were able to send thither. In this condition only one officer complained. "How, says the king, are you uneasy that you are so far from your wife? If you are a true soldier I will carry you to that distance, that you shall scarce hear from Sweden once in three years."

A soldier ventured with a murmur to present him, in presence of the whole army, with a piece of bread, that was black and mouldy, made of barley and oats, the only food they then had, nor had they enough of this: the king received the piece of bread without the least emotion, eat it entirely up, and then said coldly to the soldier, it is not good, but it may be eaten. This little turn, if any thing may be called little, that serves to increase respect and confidence, contributed more than all the rest to support the Swedish army under extremities, which would have been intolerable under any other general.

In this situation he at last received news from Stock-



holm, but it was only to inform him of the death of his sister the dutchess of Holstein, who was carried off by the small-pox in December 1708. in the 27th year of her age. She was a princess as mild and compassionate, as her brother was impetuous in his disposition and implacable in his revenge. He had always expressed a very great affection for her, and was the more afflicted at her loss, as beginning now to grow unfortunate himself, he became sensible of deeper impressions.

He learnt also that they had raised troops and money pursuant to his orders : but nothing could reach his camp ; as there lay between him and Stockholm near five hundred leagues, and an enemy superior in number to encounter.

The Czar, who was as active as the king of Sweden, after having sent fresh forces into Poland to the assistance of the confederates, united under general Siniauski against Stanislaus, advanced very soon into Ukrania in the midst of this severe Winter to oppose the king of Sweden. He continued there with the artful view of weakening the enemy by small engagements ; for by this means he thought the Swedish army must be ruined entirely at last, as it could not be recruited, whilst he was able to draw fresh forces every moment out of his own dominions.

The cold there must have been excessive indeed, since it obliged the two enemies to agree upon a suspension of arms. But upon the first of February they began to engage again in the midst of ice and snows.

After several small skirmishes, and some disadvantages, the king's army was reduced in April to eighteen thousand Swedes. Mazeppa alone, the prince of the Cossagues, supplied them with the necessaries of life. Without his assistance the army must have perished through hunger and misery. The Czar in this conjuncture offered conditions to Mazeppa, to draw him again into his service. But the Cossaque continued faithful to his new ally, whether it were through fear of the terrible punishment of the wheel, by which he had lost his friends, or whether through a desire of revenge.

Charles with his eighteen thousand Swedes, and as many Cossagues, had not laid aside the design, or hopes of penetrating as far as Moscow. Towards the end of May

he went to lay siege to Pultowa, upon the river Vorlat, on the borders of Ukrania eastward, about thirteen long leagues from the Boristhenes, where the Czar had erected a magazine. If the king took it, it would open him the road to Moscow, and in the abundance he should then possess, he could at least wait for the coming up of the succours he still expected from Sweden, Livonia, Pomerania and Poland. His sole refuge being then in the conquest of Pultowa he carried on the siege with vigour. Mazeppa, who had a correspondence in the town, assured him he would soon be master of it; and hope began to revive in his army. His soldiers looked upon the taking of Pultowa as the end of all their miseries.

The king perceived from the beginning of the siege, that he had taught his enemies the art of war. Prince Menzicof, notwithstanding all his precautions, threw fresh troops into the town, and the garrison by this means amounted to almost ten thousand men.

The king continued the siege with still more warmth, he carried the advanced works and even gave two assaults to the body of the place. The siege was in this condition, when the king, having rode into the river to take a nearer view of some of the works, received a shot from a carabine, which pierced through his boot, and shattered the bone of his heel. There was not the least alteration observed in his countenance, by which it could be suspected that he was wounded; he continued calmly to give orders, and remained near six hours on horseback afterwards. One of his domestics at last perceiving that the sole of his boot was bloody, made haste to call the surgeons; and the king's pain then began to be so sharp, that they were forced to take him off his horse, and carry him into his tent. The surgeons when they had examined the wound, were of opinion that the leg must be cut off. The army was in the utmost consternation. But one of the surgeons named Newman, who was better skilled, and more courageous than the rest, was positive that by making deep incisions he could save the king's leg. "Fall to work then presently, says the king, cut boldly, fear nothing." He held the leg himself with both his hands, looking upon the incisions that were made, as

though the operation had been performed upon another person.

As they were laying on the dressing, he gave orders for an assault the next morning ; but the orders were scarce given, before word was brought him, that the Czar appeared with an army of above seventy thousand men. He was therefore obliged to take another resolution. Charles, wounded and incapable of acting, saw himself inclosed between the Boristhenes, and the river which runs to Pultowa, in a desert country, without any places of security, or ammunition, and opposed to an army, which prevented him either from retreating or being supplied with provisions. In this extremity he did not assemble any council of war, as might have been expected; but on the 7th of July at night sent for marshal Renschild into his tent, and ordered him without deliberation, and without uneasiness, to prepare to attack the Czar the next morning. Renschild did not dispute his master's will, but went out with a resolution to obey him. At the door of the king's tent he met count Piper, with whom he had long been at variance, as it often happens between the minister and the general. Piper asked him, if any thing new had happened : No, says the general coldly, and passed on to give his orders. As soon as Piper was entered into the tent, " Has Renschild said any thing to you ? " says the king to him. " Nothing," answers Piper. " Well " then, replies the king, I tell you that to morrow we shall " give battle." Count Piper was astonished at so desperate a resolution ; but knew well that his master could not be prevailed on to change his opinion ; he only expressed his astonishment by his silence, and left the king to sleep till break of day.

'Twas on the 8th of July 1709, that the decisive battle of Pultowa was fought between the two most famous monarchs then in the world. Charles XII. illustrious by a course of nine years victories, and Peter Alexiowitz, by nine years of fatigue, spent in training up his troops to an equality with the Swedes ; the one glorious for having given away dominions, the other for having civilized his own : Charles in love with danger, and fighting only for glory ; Alexiowitz not flying from danger, and making

war only interest: the Swedish monarch liberal through a greatness of soul; and the Moscovite generous but for some private end: the one sober and continent beyond example, naturally brave, and never cruel but once; the other having not yet worn off the roughness of his education, or the brutality of his country, as terrible to his subjects, as wonderful to strangers, and too much addicted to excesses that shortened his days. Charles had the title of invincible, which one unhappy moment might rob him of; but the nations around had already given Peter Alexiowitz the name of great of which no defeat could deprive him, as no victories gave it to him.

To form a clear idea of this battle, and the place where it was fought, we must imagine Pultowa lying on the north, the camp of the king of Sweden on the south, drawing a little towards the east, his baggage about a mile behind him, and the river of Pultowa on the north of the town, running from east to west.

The Czar had passed the river about a league from Pultowa towards the west, and was beginning to form his camp.

At day-break the Swedes appeared out of their trenches with four iron cannons for their whole artillery; the rest were left in the camp with about three thousand men; and four thousand remained with the baggage. So that the Swedish army which marched against the enemy, consisted of about five and twenty thousand men, whereof there were not above twelve thousand regular troops.

The generals Renchild, Field, Levenhaup, Slipenbak, Horn, Sparre, Hamilton, the prince of Wirtemberg, who was related to the king, and some others, most of whom had seen the battle of Narva, put the subaltern officers in mind of that day, when eight thousand Swedes had destroyed an army of a hundred thousand Moscovites in their intrenchments. The officers said the same thing to the soldiers, and all encouraged one another as they marched.

The king conducted the march, carried in a litter at the head of his foot. A party of horse advanced by his order to attack that of the enemy. The battle began with this engagement at half an hour after four in the morning. The enemies horse lay westward on the right of the Mos-



covite camp: prince Menzicof and count Gallowin had placed them at a distance between redoubts fortified with cannon. General Slipenbak at the head of the Swedes, fell upon them. All who have served in the Swedish troops know that it was almost impossible to resist the fury of their first shock. The Moscovite squadrons were broken and routed. The Czar himself ran to rally them, and his hat was shot through with a musket ball; Menzicof had three horses killed under him; and the Swedes cried out victory.

Charles did not doubt but the battle was gained; he had dispatched general Creuts about midnight with five thousand horse or dragoons, who were to take the enemy in flank, whilst he attacked them in front; but his misfortune was that Creuts went out of the way, and did not appear. The Czar, who had thought himself lost, had time to rally his horse. He fell upon the king's cavalry in his turn, which not being supported by Creut's detachment, was broken likewise, and Slipenbak taken prisoner in the engagement. At the same time seventy two cannons from the camp played upon the Swedish horse, and the Russian foot opening from their lines, advanced to attack the Swedish infantry.

The Czar by a presence of mind and a penetration, which in such moments belongs only to men who are truly great, immediately detaches prince Menzicof to post himself between Pultowa and the Swedes; prince Menzicof executed his master's orders with dexterity and expedition; and not only cut off the communication between the Swedish army and the troops remaining in the camp before Pultowa, but meeting with a corps de reserve of three thousand men, he surrounded them and cut them in pieces.

In the mean time the Moscovite foot came out of their lines, and advanced in order into the plain. And on the other side, the Swedish horse rallied within a quarter of a league from the enemy's army. And the king assisted by general Renchild, made a disposition for a general engagement.

He ranged what troops were left him in two lines; his foot were posted in the center, and his horse made



up the two wings. The Czár disposed his army in the same manner; he had the advantage of numbers, and of seventy two cannon, whilst the Swedes had no more than four; and began to want powder.

The emperor of Moscovy was in the center of his army, having then the title only of major general, and seemed to serve under general Cseremetoff. But he went as emperor from rank to rank mounted on a Turkish horse, which was a present from the grand Seignior, animating the officers and soldiers, and promising every one of them rewards.

Charles did all he could to sit his horse at the head of his troops; but finding the posture too painful, he returned to his litter, holding his sword in one hand, and a pistol in the other.

At nine in the morning the battle was renewed; one of the first discharges of the Moscovite cannon carried off the two horses of the king's litter; he caused two others to be straight put to it, and a second volley broke the litter in pieces and overturned the king. The troops which fought near him believed him killed. The Swedes in a consternation lost ground, and the enemy's cannon continuing to play upon them, the first line fell back upon the second, and the second fled. In this last action the Swedish army was routed by a single line of ten thousand men of the Moscovite foot; so much were matters changed.

The king, carried upon pikes by four grenadiers, covered with blood, and all over bruised with his fall, and scarce able to speak, cried out, Swedes, Swedes. Anger and grief renewing his strength, he tried to rally some of his regiments. But the Moscovites closely pursued them with their swords, bayonets, and pikes. The prince of Wirtemberg, general Renschild, Hamilton, and Stakelberg were already taken prisoners, the camp before Pultowa forced, and all in a confusion, which did not admit of any remedy. Count Piper with all the officers of the chancery had quitted the camp, and neither knew what to do, nor what was become of the king. They ran from one side of the plain to the other. Major Bere offered to lead them to the baggage; but the clouds of dust and

smoke, which covered the field, and their own confusion, which was very natural in such a scene of desolation, carried them strait to the counterscarp of the town, where they were all taken prisoners by the garrison.

The king would not fly, and could not defend himself. General Poniatosky chanced to be by him that instant; he was a colonel of the Swedish guards of king Stanislaus, and a person of uncommon merit, whom his attachment to the person of Charles had engaged to follow him into Ukrania without any post in the army. He was one, who in all the occurrences of his life, and in dangers, where others at most would have only behaved with courage, shewed an immediate presence of mind, which was ever attended with success. He made a sign to a young Swede, named Federick, the king's first valet de chambre, and as intrepid as his master; they take the king under their arms, and assisted by a Draban who came up to them, mount him on horseback, notwithstanding the excessive pains of his wound. Federick mounted another horse riding near his master, and supporting him from time to time.

Poniatosky, though he had no command in the army, being made a general on this occasion by necessity, drew up five hundred horse near the king's person; some of them drabans, others officers, and others private troopers. This body reanimated by the misfortune of their prince, made their way through more than ten regiments of Moscovites, and conducted Charles through the midst of the enemy the space of a league, to the baggage of the Swedish army.

This surprizing retreat was of great consequence in such distress, but the king was under a necessity of flying still farther. They found amongst the baggage count Piper's coach, for the king never had one since he left Stockholm. They put him into it, and made towards the Boristhenes with all possible speed. The king, who, from the time he was set on horseback till he came to the baggage, had never spoke one word, then asked what was become of count Piper. They told him he was taken with all the officers of chancery: and general Renschild, and the duke of Wirtemberg? added the king. They are

prisoners too, says Poniatofky. Prisoners to Moscovites! replies Charles, shrugging up his shoulders. Come on then, let us go to the Turks rather. They did not observe however the least alteration in his countenance, and whoever had then seen him, and not known his condition, would have never suspected him to have been either conquered or wounded.

Whilst he was getting off, the Moscovites seized upon his artillery in the camp before Pultowa, his baggage, and the money he had raised for carrying on the war, where they found six millions in specie, the spoils of Poland and Saxony. Near nine thousand Swedes were killed in the battle, about six thousand were taken, three or four thousand ran away, and were never heard of since. There still remained near eighteen thousand men; comprehending the Cosaques, with the Swedes and Poles, who fled towards the Boristhenes under the direction of general Levenhaup. He marched one way with these fugitive troops, whilst the king took another road with some of his horse. The coach, in which he rode, broke down in his march, and they set him again on horseback. And to finish his misfortune, he wandered all night in a wood; there his courage not being able to supply any longer his exhausted spirits, and the pain of his wound becoming more insupportable by fatigue, and his horse falling under him through excessive weariness, he rested himself for some hours at the foot of a tree, in danger of being surprized every moment by the conquerors, who sought for him on all sides.

At last, on the 9th of July at night, he found himself upon the banks of the Boristhenes, and Levenhaup just arrived with the remains of his army. The Swedes saw their king again, whom they judged to have been dead, with a joy mixed with sorrow. The enemy drew nigh, and they had no bridge to pass the river, nor time to make one, nor powder to defend themselves against the enemy who came upon them, nor provisions to hinder the army from perishing with hunger, who had eat nothing for two days; but it is to be considered that the shattered remains of this army were Swedes, and that the conquered king was Charles XII. Almost all the officers imagined they

were to halt there, in expectation of the Moscovites, and that they were either to conquer or die, on the banks of the Borilthenes; and the king had undoubtedly taken that resolution, had he not been quite spent with fatigue. His wound was now come to a suppuration, attended with a fever; and it has been observed, that men of the greatest intrepidity, when they are seized with the fever that is common in a suppuration, generally lose that impulse to valour, which, like other virtues, requires a clear and undisturbed head, to facilitate its operations. Charles was therefore no longer himself, but was carried like a sick person in a state of insensibility. By good fortune there was still left a sorry calash, which by chance they had brought along with them; this they embarked in a little boat, and the king and general Mazeppa in another. The latter had saved several coffers full of money, but the current being very rapid, and a violent wind beginning to blow, the Cossaque threw more than three parts of his treasures into the river, to lighten the boat. Mul-tern the king's chancellor, and count Poniatosky, who was now more than ever necessary to the king, for his remarkable presence of mind under difficulties, crossed over in other barks with some of the officers. Three hundred troopers of the king's guard, and a very great number of Poles and Cossagues relying upon the goodness of their horses, ventured to pass the river by swimming. Their troop keeping close together resisted the current, and broke the waves; but all who attempted to cross separately a little below, were carried away by the stream and sunk in the river. Of all the foot who tried to pass over, there was not one that got to the other side.

Whilst the routed part of the army were in this extremity, prince Menzicof came up with ten thousand horse, having each a foot soldier behind him. The carcasses of the Swedes that lay dead in the way, of their wounds, fatigue, and hunger, sufficiently pointed out to prince Menzicof the road which the body of the army had taken. The prince sent a trumpet to the Swedish general to offer him a capitulation. Four general officers were presently sent by Levenhaup to receive the law of the conqueror. Before that day sixteen thousand soldiers



of king Charles would have attacked all the forces of the Russian empire, and have perished to the last man, rather than have surrendered; but after a battle lost, and a flight of two days, not having their eyes any longer upon their prince, who was constrained to fly himself, the strength of every soldier being spent, and their courage no longer supported by any hope, the love of life took place of intrepidity. There was only one colonel, named Troutsetre, and who is now governor of Stralsund, who, when he saw the Moscovites approach, placed himself at the head of a battalion, with an intent to attack them; and hoping that his example would animate the rest of the army with the same resolution; but Levenhaup was obliged to oppose this unavailing ardour. The capitulation was settled, and the whole army were made prisoners of war. Some of the soldiers, in despair to fall into the hands of the Moscovites, threw themselves into the Boristhenes: two officers of the regiment commanded by the brave Troutsetre, killed themselves upon the spot, and the rest were made slaves. They all filed off in presence of prince Menzicof, laying their arms at his feet, as thirty thousand Moscovites had done nine years before at the king of Sweden's at Narva. But whereas the king then sent back all the Moscovite prisoners, whom he was not afraid of, the Czar retained all the Swedes that were taken at Pultowa.

These unhappy creatures were afterwards dispersed in the Czar's dominions, and particularly in Siberia, a vast province of the greater Tartary, which extends itself eastward to the frontiers of the Chinese empire. In this barbarous country, where even the use of bread was not then known, the Swedes, grown ingenious by necessity, exercised the trades and arts of which they had any idea. And all the distinctions, which fortune makes among men, were then banished. The officer, who could follow no handicraft trade, was forced to cleave and carry wood for the soldier, that was now turned taylor, draper, joiner, mason or smith, and got a subsistence by his labour. Some of the officers became painters, and others architects; and some of them taught languages and mathematics; they even went so far as to erect public schools,



which in time grew to be so useful and famous, that they sent children thither for education from Moscow.

Count Piper, the king of Sweden's first minister was a long time imprisoned at Petersburg. The Czar was persuaded, with the rest of Europe, that this minister had sold his master to the duke of Marlborough, and had brought the arms of Sweden upon Moscow, which might have given peace to Europe; and he made his captivity the more severe upon this supposition. Piper died some years after at Moscow, having received but little assistance from his family, which lived in great opulence at Stockholm, and ineffectually lamented by his king, who would never condescend to offer a ransom for his minister, which he feared the Czar would not accept; for there was never any cartel of exchange between Charles and the Czar.

The emperor of Moscow, elate with a joy he was under no concern to dissemble, received upon the field of battle the prisoners they brought him, in troops, and asked every moment, where then is my brother Charles?

He paid the Swedish generals the compliment of inviting them to dine with him. Amongst other questions, he asked general Renschild, What number the troops of the king his master might amount to before the battle? Renschild answered, That the king only kept the list of them, which he never communicated to any body; but he thought the whole might be about five and thirty thousand men, whereof eighteen thousand were Swedes, and the rest Cossacks. The Czar seemed surprized, and asked how they durst venture to penetrate into so distant a country, and lay siege to Pultowa with such a handful of men! We were not always consulted, answers the Swedish general, but, as faithful servants, we obeyed our master's orders, without contradicting them. The Czar, upon this answer, turned round towards certain courtiers, who had formerly been suspected of engaging in a conspiracy against him, "Ah! says he, see how a sovereign should be obeyed." And then taking a glass of wine, "To the health, says he, of my masters in the art of war." Renschild asked, Who those were whom he honoured with so high a title? "You gentlemen, the Swedish generals," replies the Czar. "Your majesty then, says Renschild, is

"very ungrateful to treat your masters so severely." When dinner was over, the Czar ordered their swords to be restored to all the general officers, and conducted himself to them as a prince who had a mind to give his subjects lessons of generosity and civility, which he was well acquainted with.

Thus the Swedish army, which left Saxony so triumphant, was now no more. One half of them perished by want, and the other half were made slaves or massacred. Charles XII. had lost in one day the fruit of nine years pains, and almost a hundred battles. He fled in a wretched calash, having major general Hoord by his side, dangerously wounded. The rest of his troops followed, some on foot, others on horseback, and some in waggons, across a desert, where they found neither huts, tents, men, animals nor roads; every thing was wanting there even to water itself. 'Twas then the beginning of July; the country situate on the 47th degree; the dry land of the desert rendered the heat of the sun more insupportable; the horses fell by the way, and the men were ready to die with thirst. Count Poniatosky, who was a little better mounted than the rest, advanced before them into the plain, and having spied a willow, he judged there must be water nigh, and he sought about, till he found the spring. This happy discovery saved the lives of the king of Sweden's little troop. After five days march he found himself upon the banks of the river Hippanis, now called the Bogh by the barbarians, who have spoiled even to their very names the countries, which the Grecian colonies formerly made to flourish. This river joins the Boristhenes some miles lower, and falls along with it into the Black Sea.

Beyond the Bogh, towards the south, lyes the little town of Oczakow, a frontier of the Turkish empire. The inhabitants seeing a troop of soldiers coming towards them, whose dress and language they were strangers to, refused to carry them over to Oczakow without an order from Mahomet Bashaw the governor of the town. The king sent an exprefs to the governor to ask a passage; but the Turk not knowing what to do in a country where a false step very often costs a man his life, durst

take nothing upon himself without having first the permission of the Bascha of the province, who resides at Bender in Bessarabia, thirty leagues from Oczakow. The permission came with orders to pay the king all the honours due to a monarch allied to the Porte, and to furnish him with all necessary provisions. During these delays, the Moscovites having past the Boristhenes pursued the king with all possible speed, and if they had come an hour sooner they must have taken him. He had scarce passed the Bogh in the Turkish boats, before his enemies appeared to the number of almost six thousand horse. And his majesty had the misfortune of seeing five hundred of his little troop, who had not been able to get over time enough, seized by the Moscovites on the other side the river. The Bascha of Oczakow asked his pardon by an interpreter for the delays, which had occasioned the taking those five hundred men prisoners, and besought him not to complain of it to the grand Seignior. Charles promised him he would not, but gave him at the same time a severe reprimand, as if he had been speaking to one of his own subjects.

The commander of Bender, who was also sersquier, a title which answers to that of general, and bascha of the province, which signifies governor and intendant, sent presently an aga to compliment the king, and offer him a magnificent tent, with provisions, baggage, waggons, and all the conveniencies, officers, and attendants requisite to conduct him handsomely to Bender: for it is customary with the Turks not only to defray the charges of ambassadors to the place of their residence, but plentifully to supply the necessity of such princes as take refuge among them; during the time of their continuance with them.

*The End of the Fourth Book.*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK V.

The CONTENTS.

*The state of the Ottoman Porte. Charles resides near Bender. His employment. His intrigues at the Porte. His designs. Augustus restored to his throne. The King of Denmark makes a descent upon Sweden. All the other territories of Charles are invaded. The Czar makes rejoicings at Moscow. The affair of Pruth. The history of the Czarina.*

**A**CHMET III. was at that time Emperor of the Turks. He had been placed upon the throne in 1703, in the room of his brother Mustapha, by a revolution like that in England, which transferred the crown from James II. to his son-in-law William. Mustapha being governed by his Musti, whom the Turks hated, engaged the whole empire in an insurrection against him. His army with which he proposed to punish the malecontents going over to them, he was seized, deposed in form, and his brother taken from the seraglio to be made Sultan, with scarce one drop of blood spilt upon the occasion. Achmet shut up the deposed Sultan in the seraglio at Constantinople, where he lived several years after, to the great surprize of Turkey, which had been used to see

the dethronement of her princes always immediately followed by their death.

All the return the new Sultan made for a crown, which he owed to the ministers, to the generals, to the officers of the Janisaries, and in a word, to those who had a hand in the revolution, was to put them all to death one after another, for fear they should afterwards project a second revolution. By sacrificing so many brave men, he weakened the forces of the empire, but established his throne. From this time his mind was bent upon heaping up treasures, and he was the first of the Ottomans that had the courage to make a small alteration in the money, and impose new taxes; but he was obliged to drop both these enterprizes, for fear of a revolt: for the rapacity and tyranny of the grand Seignior is scarce ever felt by any but the officers of the empire, who, whatever they are else, are domestic slaves of the Sultan; but the rest of the Musulmans live in profound security, or without danger of their lives, fortunes, or liberty.

Such was the Emperor of the Turks, to whom the King of Sweden fled for refuge: and he had no sooner set foot upon the Sultan's territories at Oczakow, than he wrote him the following letter.

To the most High, most Glorious, Invincible, and August Emperor of many Empires, King of many Kingdoms, Head and Protector of many Nations, may the Almighty bless and prolong your Reign.

**T**HIS letter, signed with our royal hand, is to acquaint your imperial highness, that having punished with no less success than justice the treacherous breakers of the faith of treaties, and the law of nations; having driven king Augustus out of Poland, of which he was rather the tyrant than the king, and given the Poles a king of their own nation, who is a friend of your sublime Porte; and having pursued the Czar flying before us as far as Pultowa, Heaven has permitted our army, tired out with long marches, and in want of every thing, to be overwhelmed by the enemy who were thrice our number, and has suffered this day to be a day of grief and misfortune to us.



*Not being in a place to raise new forces, and abhorring to fall into barbarous and perfidious hands, we are come to seek for refuge and assistance in the territories of your imperial highness, that we may be enabled to return to Poland, in order to rejoin our armies, and support the King we have made there.*

*What we desire is to have you our friends, and be ourselves yours. As a proof of our sincere affection we represent to you, that if you give the Czar, whose ambition is neither directed by justice, nor honour, nor true courage, time to take the advantage of our disaster, he will fall upon your territories, when you little expect him, as he has invaded our countries; but why do I say when you little expect him! Has he not already built forts upon the Tanais and the Palus Maeotis? Does he not already threaten you with his fleets?*

*To prevent this, there can be no way so proper as a new alliance between your sublime Porte and us, provided we can but return to Poland, and to our own states with your valiant troops, and carry our arms again into the empire of this perfidious Czar, to put a stop to his unjust ambition.*

*We shall never forget the favours we shall receive from you, and shall value ourselves upon being inviolably,*

*Your faithful friend,*

*At Oczakow,  
13 July 1709.*

CHARLES XII.

Son of Charles XI.

The King suffered this letter to be sent away, though it too much injured the character of his enemies, as well as disguised his own. Perhaps after having treated the Czar, and King Augustus with great respect in his victories, his defeat had soured him; or else he took it for Turkish breeding, to rail at those against whom we ask assistance.

Achmet, who had been beforehand with him, by sending a solemn embassy in the time of his victories, made him sensible now of the difference he made between an emperor of the Turks, and a King of part of Scandinavia,

a Christian, vanquished and fugitive. He did not answer him till six months after, and then refused to be explicit upon the alliance proposed against the Czar.

*This proposal, says the Sultan to him in his letter, requires a deliberate examination. I shall leave it to the wisdom of my great Divan. I value your friendship, and grant you mine together with my protection. I have given orders to the Baschas of Natolia and Romelia, to provide a guard to conduct you safely where you think proper. Jussuf the Bascha Serafquier of Bender will advance you 500 \* dollars a day, with all necessary provisions for yourself and your attendants, and horses, that you may live as becomes a King.*

*Given at Constantinople the first day of the month Sheval the 1121 year of the Hegira.*

From the first moment of King Charles's repairing to the Turkish territories, he had laid the design of turning the Ottoman arms upon his enemies: he already fancied he saw himself at the head of the Turkish forces, reducing Poland again under the yoke, and subduing Moscow. M. de Neugebauer set out from Oczakow for Constantinople, with the character of the King's envoy extraordinary. Count Poniatosky, a person equally capable and resolute, of an engaging and agreeable temper, born with the talent of persuading and pleasing all nations, attended the Swedish embassy, but in a private capacity, in order to sound the dispositions of the Constantinopolitan ministry, without being tied up to the usual forms, and giving too much ground for suspicion: he knew how to gain in a short time the favour of the Grand Visir, who loaded him with presents; and had the art to convey a letter of the King of Sweden's to the Sultana Valide, mother to the Emperor then upon the throne, and who had formerly been ill used by her son, but now began to recover her interest in the Seraglio. He entered into a close friendship with one Bru a Frenchman, who had been chancellor to the French embassy. This man was perpetually talking of the King of Sweden's exploits to the chief of the Sultana's eunuchs, who charmed his mistress with repeating them. The Sultana, by a secret inclination, with which most women find themselves inspired in

\* A dollar is worth about a French crown of three livres.

favour of extraordinary men, even without having ever seen them, took the King's part openly in the Seraglio; she called him by no other name than that of her Lion: and when will you, said she sometimes to the Sultan her son, help my Lion to devour this Czar? She even dispensed with the strict rules of the Seraglio, so far as to write several letters with her own hand to count Poniatosky, in whose custody they still are at the time of my writing this history. One of those, who entered into Poniatosky's designs with the greatest abilities, was Fonseca, a Portuguese physician, fixed at Constantinople, a learned and ingenious person, who joined the knowledge of men to that of his own art, and whose profession procured him access to the Ottoman Porte, and often an intimacy with the Visirs.

At length the king of Sweden's party was become so powerful at Constantinople, by Poniatosky's management; that the faction of the Moscovite envoy thought their only refuge was to poison him. Accordingly they prevailed upon one of his domestics to give him poison in a dish of coffee; but the crime was discovered before it was put in execution. The poison was found in the servant's hand, in a little phial, they carried to the grand Seignior. The prisoner was tried in full Divan, and condemned to the galleys; for the Turkish law never punishes such crimes capitally, as were intended only, but not executed.

The Grand Visir appeared as eager as the Sultana Valide to serve the King of Sweden: he told Poniatosky, giving him at the same time a purse of 1000 ducats, I will take your King in one hand, and a sword in the other, and carry him to Moscow, at the head of 200000 men. This Visir, by name Chourlouly Ali-Basha, was a very able minister, expert in the art of war, and a better politician than such persons usually are. He had settled the imperial revenues under excellent regulations. He gave away small sums of money willingly which gained him creatures; but much more willingly received great sums of them, when he was upon any important negotiations, which made it seem very strange, that he should appear so favourable to an unfortunate King, who at that

time had little to give him. He was the son of a peasant at the village of Chourlou. Among the Turks it is no reproach to a great man to have been of such an extraction. Birth in that country is not at all regarded; merit is looked upon as every thing. It is common there to see the son of a labourer made a chief minister, and the son of a Visir follow the plough.

However the King was honourably conducted to Bender through the desert that was formerly called the wilderness of the Getae. The Turks took care that nothing should be wanting upon the road to make his journey agreeable. Several Poles, Swedes, and Cosaques that had made their escape one after another out of the hands of the Moscovites, came by different ways to increase his train upon the road. When he arrived at Bender he had 1800 men with him, who were all fed and lodged, both they and their horses, at the expence of the grand Seignior.

The King chose to encamp near Bender rather than lodge in the town. The Serafquier Jussuf Bascha caused a magnificent tent to be pitched for him, and tents also were provided for all the lords of his retinue. Some time after the King built a house in this place, and his officers did the same, after his example: the soldiers also raised barracks, so that the camp by degrees became a little town. The King, being not yet cured of his wound, was obliged to have a carious bone taken out of his foot; but, as soon as he was able to mount a horse, he renewed his usual fatigues, rising always before the sun, tiring three horses a day, and exercising his soldiers; but sometimes he played at chess with general Poniatofsky, or M. de Grothusen, his treasurer. Those, who had a mind to gain his favour, attended him at his horse-courses, and were all day long in their boots. One morning going to the house of his chancellor Mullern, who was asleep, he forbid them to awake him, and waited in the antichamber, where there was a large fire in the chimney, and near it several pair of shoes that Mullern had sent for from Germany, for his own use. The King threw them all into the fire, and then went away. When the chancellor upon waking perceived the smell of the burnt leather, and had enquir-



ed into the reason of it, "What a strange King is this," says he, that his chancellor must be always booted!"

At Bender he found plenty of every thing about him; a happiness very rarely attained to by a vanquished and fugitive Prince: for besides provision more than sufficient, and the five hundred crowns a day which he received from the Ottoman munificence, he drew money also from France, and borrowed of the merchants at Constantinople. Part of this money was employed in carrying on intrigues in the Seraglio, in purchasing the favour of the Vifirs, or procuring their ruin. The rest he distributed profusely among his officers, and the Janisaries of Bender. Grothusen his favourite and treasurer was the dispenser of his liberalities; a man, who, contrary to the custom of persons in that station, was as much pleased with giving as his master. He brought him one day an account of sixty thousand crowns in two lines, ten thousand given to the Swedes and Janisaries by the generous orders of his majesty, and the rest spent by myself. "See, says the King, how I like my friends should give in their accompts." Mullern makes me read whole pages for the sum of ten thousand livres. But I like Grothusen's Laconic style much better." One of his old officers, thought to be a little covetous, complained to the King that he gave all to Grothusen. "I give money, replies the King, to none but those who know how to make use of it." This generosity often reduced him to such straits, that he had not wherewithal to give. A better oeconomy in his liberalities had been more for his advantage and not less honourable, but it was this Prince's failing, to drive all the virtues to excess.

Great numbers of strangers ran from Constantinople to see him. The Turks and neighbouring Tartars came thither in crowds; all honoured and admired him. His rigidity in abstaining from wine, and his regularity in attending the public devotions twice a day, made them say that he was a true Musulman. They were impatient to march with him to the conquest of Moscow.

While he continued at Bender, which was longer than he thought to do, he insensibly acquired a taste for books. Baron Fabricius, son to the duke of Holstein's first mini-



ster, a very agreeable young man, of such gaiety of temper, and an easy turn of wit as takes with Princes, was the person that prevailed upon him to read. He had been sent as envoy to him at Bender, to take care of the interests of the young duke of Holstein, and carried his point by the agreeableness of his manner and behaviour. He had read all French writers of reputation, and persuaded the King to read the tragedies of the great Corneille, those of M. Racine, and the works of M. Despreaux. His Majesty had no relish for Despreaux's satyrs, which are by no means his best performances; but he much admired his other works. But when he read that passage in his eighth satyr in which the author makes Alexander a fool and a madman, he tore out the leaf.

Of all the French tragedies, Mithridates pleased him most, because the situation of that King, vanquished and breathing vengeance, resembled his own. He pointed with his finger before M. Fabricius to the places that struck him, but would read none of them aloud, nor ever venture to speak a word in French. Nay, when he afterwards saw at Bender M. Desaleurs, the French ambassador at the Porte, a person of distinguished merit, but acquainted only with his mother-tongue, he answered him in Latin; and upon Desaleurs protesting that he did not understand four words in that language, the King rather than talk French called for an interpreter.

Thus was Charles XII. employed at Bender, where he waited till an army of Turks should come to his assistance. To dispose the Ottoman Porte to this war, he detached about eight hundred Poles and Cosaques of his retinue, with orders to pass the Neister, that runs by Bender, and to go and observe what passed upon the frontiers of Poland.

The Moscovite troops dispersed in those quarters fell immediately upon this little company, and pursued them even to the territories of the grand Seignior. This was what the King of Sweden expected. His ministers and emissaries at the Porte made a great clamour against this irruption, and excited the Turks to vengeance: but the Czar's money removed all difficulties. Tolstoy his envoy at Constantinople gave the grand Visir and his creatures

part of the six millions that had been found at Pultowa in the King of Sweden's military chest. After such a defence the Divan found the Czar not guilty. And so far were they from talking of making war against him, that they granted such honours and privileges to his envoy as the Moscovite ministers had never before enjoyed at Constantinople. He was suffered to have a *seraglio*, that is, a palace in the quarters of the Franks, and to converse with the foreign ministers. Nay the Czar thought he had power enough to demand that general Mazeppa should be delivered up to him, as Charles XII. had caused the unfortunate Patkul to be surrendered into his hands. Chourlouly Ali-Basha could no longer refuse any thing to a Prince, who backed his demand with millions. Thus the same grand Visir, who before had made a solemn promise to carry the King of Sweden into Moscow with two hundred thousand men, had the assurance to make a proposal to him of consenting to the sacrifice of general Mazeppa. King Charles was enraged at the question. However it is not certain, how far the Visir could have carried the matter, had not Mazeppa, who was then seventy years of age, died just at this juncture. The King's grief and resentment were very much augmented, when he understood that Tolstoy, now become the Czar's ambassador at the Porte, was served in public by the Swedes that had been made slaves at Pultowa, and that these brave soldiers were daily sold in the market at Constantinople. Besides the Moscovite ambassador declared openly, that the Mussulman troops at Bender were placed there rather as a guard upon the King, than to do him honour.

King Charles abandoned by the grand Visir, and conquered by the Czar's money in Turkey as he had been by his arms in Ukrania, found himself deluded, scorned by the Porte, and in a manner a prisoner among the Tartars. His attendants began to despair. Himself alone remained firm, and did not shew the least dejection of spirit, no not for a moment. He imagined the Sultan was ignorant of the intrigues of Chourlouly Ali his grand Visir, and resolved to make him acquainted with them, and Poniatosky undertook this bold commission. The grand

Seignior went every friday to the mosque encompassed with his Solacks, a kind of guard whose turbans were set with feathers so high, that they hid the Sultan from the eyes of the people. When any one had a petition to present to the grand Seignior, the way was to mix himself among these guards, and hold the petition up in the air. Sometimes the Sultan vouchsafed to take it himself; but more frequently he ordered an Aga to take care of it, and afterwards upon his return from the mosque, caused the petitions to be laid before him. There is no fear of any one's daring to importune him with trifling and unnecessary petitions; for at Constantinople they write less in a year, than they do at Paris in a day. Much less does any one venture to present petitions against the ministers, to whom for the most part, the Sultan remits them without reading them. However, Poniatosky had no other way to convey the King of Sweden's complaints to the grand Seignior. He drew up a representation against the grand Visir sufficient to ruin him. M. de Feriolle, who was at that time the French ambassador, got it translated into Turkish. A Greek was hired to present it, who, mingling himself among the grand Seignior's guard, held up the paper so high, and for so long a time, and made such a noise, that the Sultan perceived it, and took the memoir himself.

Some days after the Sultan in answer to the King of Sweden's complaints, sent him twenty five Arabian horses, one of which that had carried his highness, was covered with a saddle and housings enriched with precious stones, and the stirrups were of massy gold. With this present he sent an obliging letter, but conceived in general terms, and such as gave reason to suspect that the minister had done nothing without the Sultan's consent. Chourlouly also, who knew how to dissemble, sent five very curious horses to the King. But his Majesty, with a haughty air, told the person that brought them; "Go back to your master, and tell him, that I don't receive presents from mine enemies."

M. Poniatosky having already had the courage to get a petition presented against the grand Visir, then formed the bold design of deposing him. He knew the Visir was

no favourite of the Sultan's mother, and was the aversion both of Kissar Aga, the chief of the black eunuchs, and of the Aga of Janisaries: he encouraged all three to speak against him. It was very strange to see a Christian, a Pole, an agent without character of a Swedish King, who had fled for refuge to the Turks, caballing publicly in a manner at the Porte against a vice-roy of the Ottoman empire, and such a one too as was both an useful minister and a favourite of his master. Poniatosky had never succeeded, and the bare attempt had cost him his life, had not a stronger power than all those in his interests given the last blow to the grand Visir Chourlouly's fortune.

The Sultan had a young favourite, who has since governed the Ottoman empire, and was killed in Hungary in 1716, at the battle of Peterwardin, gained over the Turks by Prince Eugene of Savoy. His name was Coumourgi Ali-Basha. His birth was much the same with that of Chourlouly. He was the son of a coal-heaver, as Coumourgi signifies: for Coumour is the same as coal in Turkish. The Emperor Mahomet, uncle of Achmet III. meeting Coumourgi when he was a child, in a forest near Adrianople, was so struck with his great beauty, that he sent him to the seraglio. Mustapha, Mahomet's eldest son and successor, was much taken with him, and Achmet III. made him his favourite. He had then no other place but that of Selihtar Aga, sword-bearer to the crown. His early youth would not admit of his pretending to the office of grand visir, but yet he had the ambition to do it. The Swedish faction could never gain the inclinations of this favourite. He was at no time a friend to King Charles, or any other Christian Prince, or any of their ministers: but on this occasion, he served King Charles without designing it. He joined with the Sultana Valide, and the great officers of the Porte, to contrive Chourlouly's ruin, whom they all hated. This old minister, who had long and well served his master, fell a sacrifice to the caprice of a boy, and the intrigues of a stranger. He was deprived of his dignity and his wealth, his wife who was daughter to the last Sultan Mustapha was taken from him, and himself banished to Caffa, formerly called Theodosia, in Crim Tartary. The bull, that is to say, the seal of the empire,



was given to Numan Couprougly, grandson to the great Couprougly, who took Candia. This new Visir was, what Christians misinformed would hardly believe of a Turk, a man of inflexible virtue, and a scrupulous observer of the law; and he often opposed justice to the Sultan's will. He would not hear of a war against Moscovy, which he looked upon as unjust and unnecessary. But the same attachment to his law, which hindered him from waging war against the Czar, contrary to the faith of treaties, made him regard the duty of hospitality with respect to the King of Sweden. "The law, said he to his master, forbids you to invade the Czar, who has done you no injury; but commands you to succour the King of Sweden, who is an unfortunate Prince in your dominions." He sent his Majesty 800 purses, every one of which amounted to 500 crowns, and advised him to return peaceably into his own dominions, through the Emperor of Germany's territories, or else in some French vessels, that were then lying at the port of Constantinople, and which M. de Feriulle, the French ambassador at the Porte, offered King Charles, to transport him to Marseilles.

The King of Sweden, who in his prosperity had provoked the Emperor of Germany, and disobliged Lewis XIV. thought it too great a mortification to owe his return to France, and that he should run too great a risk of his liberty in passing through the Imperial territories. He rejected with an air of disdain both these ways of returning to his kingdom, and sent the Visir and M. de Feriulle word, that he should depend upon the grand Seignior's promise, and hoped to re-enter Poland as a conqueror with an army of Turks. In the mean time, while he made his fate depend upon the caprice of a Visir, and was forced to put up with the affronts as well as receive the favours of the Ottoman Court, all his enemies took courage, and invaded his kingdom.

The battle of Pultowa was immediately the signal of a revolution in Poland. King Augustus returned thither protesting against his abdication, and the peace of Altranstad, and publicly accusing Charles XII. whom he now no longer feared, of robbery and cruelty. He imprisoned

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Finſten and Imoſ his plenipotentiaries, who had ſigned his abdication, as if in ſo doing they had exceeded their orders, and betrayed their maſter. His Saxon troops, that had been the pretence of his dethronement, brought him back to Warſaw, attended with moſt of the Poſiſh Palatines, who, having formerly ſworn fidelity to him, had afterwards done the ſame to Stanislaus, and were come to do it again to Auguſtus. Siniaulky himſelf came into his meaſures, and forgetting his former ambitious views of making himſelf King, was content to remain grand General of the crown. Fleming, his firſt miniſter, who did not dare to continue in Saxony, for fear of being delivered up as Patkul was, contributed at that time by his management, to bring over great part of the Poſiſh nobility to his maſter.

The Pope abſolved his people from the oath of allegiance they had ſworn to Stanislaus. This ſtep of the holy father, ſeaſonably taken and ſupported by Auguſtus's forces, was of no ſmall weight: it eſtabliſhed the intereſt of the court of Rome in Poland, where they had then no inclination to diſpute with the ſovereign pontiffs, the chimerical right of meddling with the temporalities of kings. Every one was ready to ſubmit to Auguſtus's authority again, and received, without the leaſt oppoſition, an uſeleſs abſolution which the nuncio did not fail to repreſent as neceſſary.

Charles's power, and the grandeur of Sweden, were now drawing to their laſt period. Above ten crowned heads had for ſome time beheld, with fear and envy, the Swediſh government extending itſelf far beyond its natural bounds, to the other ſide of the Baltic Sea, from the Duna quite up to the Elbe. Charles's miſfortune, and his abſence, awakened the intereſts and jealousies of all theſe Princes, which had for a long ſeaſon been laid aſleep by treaties, and an inability to break them.

The Czar, who was more powerful than all of them put together, making immediately the beſt uſe of his victory, took Wibourg, and all Carelia, overrun Finland with his troops, ſat down before Riga, and ſent an army into Poland to aſſiſt Auguſtus in the recovery of his throne. This emperor was at that time what Charles had been

formerly, the arbiter of Poland and the North. But he consulted only his own interests; whereas Charles had never any other views than those of revenge and glory. The Swedish monarch had succoured his allies, and crushed his enemies, without insisting upon the least advantage as the fruit of his victories: but the Czar behaved more like a prince than a hero, and would not assist the King of Poland, but upon condition that Livonia should be delivered up to him, and that this province, for the sake of which Augustus had kindled the war, should remain to the Moscovites for ever.

The King of Denmark forgetting the treaty of Travandal, as Augustus had that of Alranstad, had from that time thoughts of making himself master of the dutchies of Hollstein and Bremen, to which he renewed his pretensions. These three Princes met at Dresden, at the end of the year 1709. Thus Augustus, who two years before had received Charles there as his conqueror, saw shortly after in the same city, those very allies whom the King of Sweden had forced him to renounce. At this interview Peter Alexiowitz, Augustus and Fredrick, settled the division of the conquests they were going upon. The King of Prussia also entertained these three monarchs at his castle of Potsdam, and entered into their alliance. He had formerly a title to Swedish Pomerania, which he had now a mind to revive. The duke of Mecklenburgh was provoked to see Sweden still in possession of Wismar, the finest city in his dutchy. This Prince was to marry the Emperor of Moscovy's niece, and the Czar only wanted a pretence to establish himself in Germany, after the example of the Swedes. George, elector of Hanover, wanted likewise to enrich himself with Charles's spoils. The bishop of Munster also would have been glad to make the best of some pretensions of his, if he had been in a capacity to do it.

There were about twelve or thirteen thousand Swedes who defended Pomerania, and the other countries which Charles possessed in Germany. Here was to have been the seat of the war. But this storm alarmed the Emperor and his allies. For it is a law of the empire, that whoever

ver invades one of the provinces should be reputed an enemy to the whole Germanic body.

But there was a still much greater difficulty in the affair. All these Princes, except the Czar, were then in league against Lewis XIV. whose power had for some time been as formidable to the empire as that of King Charles.

Germany, at the beginning of the century, found itself hard pressed from the south to the north, between the French and Swedish armies. The French had passed the Danube, and the Swedes the Oder: if their forces, victorious as they then were, had joined, the empire had been lost. But the same fatality that ruined Sweden, had also humbled France: however, the power of Sweden was not exhausted, and Lewis XIV. carried on the war with vigour, though without success. Had Pomerania, and the dutchy of Bremen, been made the seat of the war, it was to be feared the empire would be the worse for it, and, being weakened on that side, would be less able to hold out against Lewis XIV. To remove this inconvenience, the Emperor, the Princes of Germany, Queen Ann of England, and the States General of the united provinces, concluded at the Hague, about the end of the year 1709, one of the most singular treaties that ever was signed.

It was stipulated by these powers, that the seat of the war should not be in Pomerania, nor any other country of Germany, but that the enemies of Charles XII. might attack him every where else. The King of Poland and the Czar came themselves into this treaty, and caused an article to be inserted, which was as extraordinary as the treaty itself, viz. that the 12000 Swedes in Pomerania should not depart thence to defend their other provinces.

To secure the execution of this treaty, it was proposed to raise an army for maintaining this imaginary neutrality, which was to encamp on the banks of the Oder. A strange and unheard of contrivance, to levy an army, in order to prevent a war! Nay, those who were to furnish the army's pay were for the most part very much concerned to bring about the war they pretended to avert. It was, by the treaty, to consist of the troops of the Empe-

ror, the King of Prussia, the elector of Hanover, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the bishop of Munster.

The event of this project was such as one might naturally expect. It was not executed. The Princes, who were to furnish their quota for raising an army, contributed nothing; not two regiments were formed. There was much talk of a neutrality, but no body observed it; and all the northern Princes, who had any controversy with the King of Sweden, were left at full liberty to dispute who should have his spoils.

During these conjunctures the Czar having quartered his forces in Lithuania, and given orders for carrying on the siege of Riga, returned to Moscow, to shew his people a sight as new as any thing he had yet done in his kingdom. It was a triumph very little inferior to that of the old Romans. He made his entry into Moscow on the first of January 1710, under seven triumphal arches erected in the streets, and adorned with all that the climate could furnish, and a flourishing trade, as his industry had made it, could import. The procession began with a regiment of guards, followed by the pieces of artillery taken from the Swedes at Lesnow and Pultowa, each of which was drawn by eight horses covered with scarlet housings reaching down to the ground. Then came the standards, kettle-drums and colours won at these two battles, carried by the officers and soldiers who had taken them: all these spoils were followed by the finest troops of the Czar. After they had filed off, appeared in a chariot made for that purpose, the litter of Charles XII. found in the field of battle at Pultowa, all broken to pieces by two cannon-shot. Behind this litter marched all the prisoners two by two, among whom was count Piper first minister of Sweden, the famous marshal Renchild, count Levenhaup, the generals Slipenbac, Stakelburgh and Hamilton, and all the officers and soldiers who were afterwards dispersed in great Russia. They were immediately followed by the Czar, on the same horse he rid upon at the battle of Pultowa. A little behind him appeared the generals who had their share in the success of this battle: and after them came another regiment of guards; and

the waggons loaded with Swedish ammunition brought up the rear.

This solemn procession was attended with the ringing all the bells in Moscow, with the sound of drums, kettle-drums, trumpets, and an infinite number of musical instruments answering each other; with vollies discharged from 200 pieces of cannon, and the acclamations of 500000 men, who at every stop the Czar made in his triumphal entry cried, *God preserve the Emperor our father.*

The deluding cavalcade augmented the people's veneration for his person, and perhaps made him appear greater in their eyes, than all the real good he had done them. In the mean time he continued the blockade of Riga, and the generals made themselves masters of the rest of Livonia, and part of Finland. At the same time the King of Denmark came with his entire fleet to make a descent upon Sweden, where he landed 17000 men, whom he left under the command of count Reventlau.

Sweden was at that time governed by a Regency, composed of some Senators appointed by the King at his departure from Stockholm. The senatorial body, which looked upon the government as of right belonging to them, was jealous of the Regency, and the state suffered by these divisions. But upon the first news they received at Stockholm, after the battle of Pultowa, viz. That the King was at Bender, in the hands of the Turks and Tartars, and that the Danes had made a descent upon Schonen, and taken the town of Ellsingsburg, all jealousies vanished, and they thought of nothing but saving Sweden. There were now very few regular forces left. For notwithstanding Charles had always made his great expeditions at the head of small armies, yet the innumerable battles he had been engaged in for nine years together, the constant necessity he was under of recruiting his forces, and maintaining his garrisons, and the standing army he was obliged to keep always in Finland, Ingria, Livonia, Pomerania, Bremen, and Verden: all this had cost Sweden, during the course of the war, above 250000 soldiers, and there remained not so many as 8000 men of the old troops, who, with the new forces, were the only defence of Sweden.

King Charles XI. among several laws that drew upon



him the charge of tyranny, had made some that deserved the thanks of his country: particularly he formed a militia that continues to this day, and is neither a charge to the public treasury, nor too burdensome to private persons, and always furnishes the state with soldiers, without taking the husbandmen from the plough. The richest towns or lordships, that formerly did or at present do hold of the crown, maintain a trooper at their own expence. The peasants of each village provide a foot soldier in proportion to their circumstances; that is, there must be a certain estate, suppose of 10 or 12000 livres, before they can be obliged to fit out a soldier for the infantry. He that has but 5 or 6000 livres, joins with another that has as much; and he that has but 3000, contributes his share with several more, and all together supply the state with a man.

If the revenue of the whole village does not amount to more than 10000 livres, that village finds but one man. Upon the death of a soldier they that found him supply his place with another. And thus the number of the militia is always the same, after it has been once settled by the states-general. The peasants build a house or cottage for the soldier they maintain, and assign him and his family a piece of ground, which he is obliged to cultivate. These soldiers who are thus distributed among the villages have their rendezvous, at stated times, in the chief market-town of the canton, under the command of their officers, who are paid out of the public treasury.

In the more populous countries, each village has his corporal, who exercises his regiment once a week. The sergeant, who has a larger jurisdiction, sees his every five days, and so by degrees to the colonel, who takes a review of his regiment every three months.

Thus was Sweden a seminary of soldiers during the wars of Charles XII. The nation is born with a military genius, and the whole people insensibly received the same cast of mind as their king. From one end of the country to the other nothing was talked of but the prodigious exploits of Charles and his generals, and of the old regiments that fought under them at Narva, Duna, Craßau, Pultusk and Hollofin. From hence the very lowest of the Swedes

became animated with a spirit of emulation and glory, and their tenderness for their King, their compassion for his misfortunes, and their implacable aversion to the Danes, gave a new energy to that impression. In several other countries the peasants are slaves, or treated as such; but here they make a figure in the state, are looked upon as citizens, and form to themselves sentiments of honour and grandeur; so that, in short, these forces became in a little time the best troops of the North.

General Steinbock, by order of the Regency, put himself at the head of 8000 old troops, and 12000 of the new ones, to go in pursuit of the Danes, who ravaged all the country about Ellsingburg, and had already put some distant places under contribution.

There was neither time nor opportunity to clothe the militia with military habits. Most of these boors came in their flaxen frocks, having pistols tied to their girdles with cords. Steinbock, at the head of this extraordinary army, came up with the Danes within three leagues of Ellsingburg, on the 10th of March, 1710. He was minded to rest his troops some days, to entrench himself, and give these new soldiers time to be acquainted with the enemy: but all the peasants called out to fight at the very moment of their arrival.

Some officers who were there told me, they saw them foam almost to a man with rage; so excessive is the national hatred of the Swedes to the Danes. Steinbock took the advantage of this disposition, which, in a day of battle, is of as much service as military discipline. The Danes were attacked, and one might have seen what perhaps is not to be parallel'd by two more instances of the like kind, raw forces equal in the first onset the intrepidity of the old regiments. Two regiments of these undisciplined peasants cut the regiment of the King of Denmark's guards in pieces, and left but ten men remaining.

The Danes being entirely routed, made their retreat under the cannon of Ellsingburg. The passage from Sweden to Zealand is so short that the King of Denmark received the same day, at Copenhagen, the news of his army's defeat in Sweden, and sent his fleet to bring off the remains of his troops. The Danes quitted Sweden

with precipitation five days after the battle, but being unable to bring away their horses; and not caring to leave them to the enemy, they killed them all in the parts about Ellsingburg, and set fire to their provisions, burning their corn and baggage, and leaving 4000 wounded at Ellsingburg, the greatest part of whom died by the infection they received from so many dead horses, and for want of provision, which their own countrymen deprived them of, to prevent its falling into the hands of the Swedes.

At the same time the peasants of Dalecarlia, having in the midst of their forests heard say, that their King was prisoner in Turkey, sent a deputation to the Regency of Stockholm, and offered to go at their own expence, to the number of 20000 men, to deliver their master out of the hands of his enemies. This proposal, which, tho' of no significancy, shewed the courage and loyalty of the proposers, was heard with pleasure, notwithstanding it was rejected. Nor did they fail to give the King an account of it, when they sent him the particulars of the battle of Ellsingburg.

King Charles received this comfortable news in his camp at Bender, in July 1710, and in a little time after another accident confirmed him in his hopes.

The grand Visir Couprougly, who opposed his designs, was turned out after he had been two months in the ministry. Charles the XIIth's little court, and those who still adhered to him in Poland, gave out that he made and deposed the Visirs, and governed the Turkish empire from his retreat at Bender. But he had no hand in that favourite's ruin. The rigid probity of the Visir was the only cause of his fall. His predecessor was used to pay the Janisaries not out of the Imperial treasury, but out of such money as he got by extortion. Couprougly, on the other hand, paid them out of the treasury. Upon this Achmet reproached him with preferring the interest of the subject to that of the Emperor. Your predecessor Chourlouly, said he, could find other ways and means to pay my troops. The grand Vizir answered, *If he had the art to enrich your highness by rapine, it is such a one as I esteem it an honour to be ignorant of.*

The great secrecy that reigns in the seraglio, rarely suffers such discourses to creep abroad. But this was known with Couprougly's disgrace. That Vizir's freedom did not cost him his head, because true virtue often draws respect even from those who are displeased with it. He had leave to retire to the island of Negropont.

After this the grand Seignior sent to Aleppo for Baltagi Mahomet, Bascha of Syria, who had been grand Visir before Chourlouly. The Baltagi's of the seraglio, so called from Balta, which signifies an ax, are slaves employed to cut wood for the use of the Princes of the blood, and the Sultanas. The Visir had been a Baltagi in his youth, and had ever since retained the name, according to the custom of the Turks, who are not ashamed to take the name of their first profession, of their father, or the place of their nativity.

At the time that Baltagi Mahomet was a servant in the seraglio, he had the good fortune to do Prince Achmet some small piece of service, that Prince being then a prisoner of state in the reign of his brother Mustapha. Now it is a custom in the seraglio, that the Princes of the Ottoman blood should have for their pleasure some women who are past child-bearing, (which is very early the case of the Turkish women) and yet agreeable enough to please. One of these female slaves, who had been much beloved by Achmet, he gave in marriage upon his being made Sultan, to Baltagi Mahomet. This woman, by her intrigues, made her husband grand Visir. Another intrigue deposed him, and a third made him Visir again.

Baltagi Mahomet had no sooner received the seals of the empire, than he found the King of Sweden's interest prevailing in the seraglio. The Sultana Valide, Ali Coumourgi the grand Seignior's favourite, the Kissar Aga chief of the black eunuchs, and the Aga of the Janisaries, were for war against the Czar. The Sultan was determined upon it, and the very first order he gave the grand Visir, was to go and fall upon the Moscovites with 200000 men. Baltagi Mahomet had never been in the field, but then he was by no means an idiot, as the Swedes out of pure hatred have represented him. He told the grand Seignior, upon receiving from his hand a sabre set with precious stones,

your highness knows that I've been brought up to use an ax and fell wood, and not to wield a sword and command armies: I will endeavour to serve you in the best manner I am able, but if I fail of success, remember that I have intreated you not to lay it to my charge. The Sultan assured him of his good will, and the Visir prepared to obey him.

The first step of the Ottoman Porte upon this occasion, was to imprison the Moscovite ambassador in the castle of Seven Towers. It is the custom of the Turks to begin with seizing the ministers of those Princes against whom they declare war. Tho' strict observers of hospitality in every thing else, in this they violate the most sacred law of nations. And yet it is under a pretence of equity that they act thus unjustly, imagining or being willing to have it believed, that they never undertake any war but what is just, because consecrated by the approbation of the Musti: upon this principle they look upon themselves as armed to chastise the infringers of treaties, which they often break themselves, and think the ambassadors of kings in enmity with them are to be punished as accomplices in the treachery of their masters.

To this may be added, the ridiculous contempt they affect towards Christian Princes and their ambassadors, whom for the most part they look upon only as consuls of merchants.

The Han of Crim Tartary, whom we call the Kam, had orders to be in readiness with 40000 Tartars. This Prince reigns over Nogai, Bondgiac, part of Circassia, and all the Crim country known to antiquity by the name of Taurica Chersonesus, whither the Greeks carried their commerce and their arms, building large cities there, and whither the Genoese have since penetrated, when they were masters of the trade of Europe. In this country are to be seen the ruins of some Grecian cities, and some monuments of the Genoese still subsisting in the midst of ruin and desolation.

The Kam is by his own subjects called Emperor; but notwithstanding this grand title, he is a mere slave of the Porte. The Ottoman blood, of which the Kams are descended, and the right they have to the Turkish empire



upon the extinction of the grand Seignior's race, makes their family be respected, and their persons formidable, even to the Sultan himself. It is upon this account that the grand Seignior dares not destroy the race of the Kams of Tartary: but he hardly ever suffers any of them to continue upon the throne to an advanced age. Their steps are always watched by the neighbouring Baschas; their territories encompassed with Janisaries; their inclinations crossed by the grand Visir; and their designs ever suspected. If the Tartars complain of the Kam, the Porte deposes him; if he is beloved by them, it is a crime, for which he is sooner punished than the other. Thus all of them, in a manner, pass from the crown into banishment, and finish their days at Rhodes, which most commonly is both their prison and their grave.

The Tartars their subjects are the greatest thieves of any people upon the face of the earth, and yet, which is hardly to be conceived, they are at the same time the most hospitable. They travel fifty leagues out of the country to fall upon a caravan, and destroy towns; but if any stranger happens to pass thro' their country, he is not only received and lodged every where, and his expences born for him; but whatever place he comes to, the inhabitants strive who shall have the honour to make him their guest. The master of the house, his wife and daughters are ready to quarrel who shall attend upon him. The Scythians, their ancestors, transmitted to them this inviolable regard to hospitality; and they still retain it, because the small number of strangers that travel thro' their country, and the low price of all kind of provisions, makes this virtue no ways burdensome to them.

When the Tartars go to war in conjunction with the Ottoman army, they are maintained by the grand Seignior, but receive no other pay except their booty. This makes them better at pillage, than a regular engagement.

The Kam gained by the presents and intrigues of the King of Sweden, got leave that the general rendezvous of the troops might be at Bender under the eyes of Charles XII. to let him see the better, that it was for his sake the war was undertaken.

The new Visir, Baltagi Mahomet, not being under

the same engagements would not flatter a foreign Prince so far. He recalled the order, and this great army was drawn together partly at Belgrade, and partly at Adrianople.

The Turkish troops are not at this time so formidable as they have been, when they conquered so many kingdoms in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Then they triumphed over enemies less robust and worse disciplined than themselves by strength of body, and the valour and number of their men. But now that the Christians understand the art of war better, they scarce ever fail to beat the Turks in a pitched battle, even when their forces are unequal. If the Ottoman empire has lately gained some conquests, it is only upon the republic of Venice, esteemed more wise than warlike, defended by strangers, and ill supported by the Christian Princes, who are always divided among themselves.

The Janisaries and Spahis always make their attack in disorder, are never under command nor able to rally. Their cavalry which should be excellent, considering the goodness and agility of their horses, cannot sustain the shock of the German cavalry. The infantry, in like manner, cannot use the bayonet at the end of the fusée to advantage. Besides, the Turks have had no great general among them since Couprougly, who conquered the isle of Candia. A slave brought up in idleness and the silence of a seraglio, made a Visir by interest, and a general against his inclination, headed a raw army, without experience and without discipline, against Moscovite troops, exercised in war for twelve years together, and proud of having conquered the Swedes.

The Czar, in all appearance, must have vanquished Baltagi Mahomet, but he committed the same fault in regard to the Turks, that the King of Sweden was guilty of in his case; that is, he too much despised his enemy. Upon the news of the Turkish preparations, he left Moscow; and having given orders to turn the siege of Riga into a blockade, he drew up his army to the number of 80,000 men upon the frontiers of Poland. With his army he marched to Moldavia and Walachia, formerly the

country of the Daci, but now inhabited by Greek Christians tributaries to the grand Seignior.

A Greek named Cantemir, made Prince of Moldavia by the Turks, joined the Czar, whom he already looked upon as conqueror, and made no scruple to betray the Sultan of whom he held his principality, for the sake of a Christian Prince, from whom he expected much greater advantages. The Czar entered into a secret alliance with him, received him into his army, and marching up the country, arrived in June 1711, at the northern side of the river Hierafus, now Pruth, near Jazy the capital of Moldavia.

As soon as the grand Visir received the news that Peter Alexiowitz was come thither, he immediately left the camp at Belgrade, and following the course of the Danube, proposed to pass that river on a bridge of boats near Saccia, in the very same place where Darius formerly built a bridge that bore his name. The Turkish army marched with so much expedition, that they soon came in sight of the Moscovites, the river Pruth being between them.

The Czar sure of the Prince of Moldavia, little thought the subjects would fail him. But the Moldavians are often in a different interest from that of their master. They liked the Turkish government, which is never fatal to any but the Grandees, and affects a lenity to people who are its tributaries. They feared the Christians, especially the Moscovites, who had upon all occasions used them barbarously. They brought all their provisions to the Ottoman army. The undertakers, who had engaged to furnish the Moscovites with provisions, performed their promise to the grand Visir, though it was made to the Czar. The Walachians, whose country adjoins to that of Moldavia, shewed the same regard to the Turks; to such a degree had the remembrance of former cruelties alienated their minds from the Moscovites.

The Czar, thus frustrated of his hopes, which perhaps he had inconsiderately entertained, found his army on a sudden destitute of provisions, and without forage. In the mean time the Turks passed the river that separated them from the enemy. All the Tartars, according to custom,

swam over it, holding by the tail of their horses. The Spahis, which are the Turkish horse, did the same, because the bridges were not ready time enough.

At length the whole army being got over, the Visir pitched a camp, and fortified it with trenches. It is strange the Czar should not dispute the passage of the river, or at least repair this fault, by engaging the Turks immediately, instead of giving them time to tire out his army with fatigue and famine. But that Prince seems in this campaign, to have taken all the steps that could lead to his ruin. He found himself without provisions, with the river Pruth behind him, and near 150000 Turks before him, and about forty thousand Tartars continually harrassing him on the right-hand and on the left. Reduced to this extremity, he said publicly, "I am at least in as bad a case as my brother Charles was at Pultowa."

The indefatigable count Poniatosky, agent to the King of Sweden, was in the grand Visir's army with some Poles and Swedes, who all thought the Czar's ruin inevitable.

As soon as Poniatosky saw that the armies must infallibly engage, he sent an express to the King of Sweden who set out that moment from Bender, followed by forty officers, and enjoying by anticipation the pleasure of fighting the Emperor of Moscovy. After many a loss, and several destructive marches, the Czar was driven back upon the Pruth, and had no cover left but some *chevaux de frise*, and some waggons. A party of the Janisaries and Spahis fell immediately upon his army in that defenceless condition, but they did it in a tumultuous and disorderly manner; and were received by the Moscovites with a resolution, which nothing but despair and the presence of their prince could inspire.

The Turks were twice repulsed. But the day following, M. Poniatosky advised the grand Visir to starve out the Moscovite army, who, being destitute of all provision, would, in a day's time, be obliged, together with their Emperor, to surrender at discretion.

The Czar has since that time more than once acknowledged, that in all his life he never felt so much uneasiness as he did that night. He revolved in his mind all that he had been doing, for so many years, for the glory and

good of his nation; that so many great designs, perpetually interrupted by successive wars, were now in all probability going to perish with him, before they were brought to perfection; that he must either die with hunger, or engage near 200,000 men with feeble troops, less by half the number than when they first set out; a cavalry almost dismounted, and the foot worn out with famine and fatigue.

About the beginning of the night he called general Czeremetof to him, and gave him a peremptory order to get every thing ready by break of day, to charge the Turks with bayonets at the muzzle of their muskets.

He gave express orders also to burn all the baggage, and that no officer should keep above one waggon; that in case of a defeat, the enemy however might not get the booty they expected.

Having settled every thing with the General in order to the battle, he retired into his tent full of grief, and seized with convulsions, a distemper he was often troubled with, and which came upon him with double the violence when he was under any great uneasiness. He forbid all persons to enter his tent in the night, upon any pretence whatsoever, not caring to have any remonstrances made to him against a desperate but necessary resolution, and much less that any one should be a witness of the melancholy condition he was in.

In the mean time the greatest part of his baggage was burnt according to his order, and all the army followed the example, though with much regret; but some buried such of their things as were most valuable. The general officers had already given orders for the march, and endeavoured to inspire the army with a courage which themselves wanted: but the soldiers, quite exhausted with fatigue and hunger, marched without spirit and without hope; and yet, to enervate their courage still more, had their ears filled with the shrieks and cries of women, of whom there was too great a number in the army. Every one expected death or slavery to be their portion the next morning. What is here related is no exaggeration, but is literally the account that was given by some officers who served in the army.



There was at that time in the Moscovite camp a woman as extraordinary perhaps as the Czar himself. She was then known only by the name of Catharine. Her mother was a poor country-woman, named Erb-Magden, of the village of Ringen in Eltonia, a province where the people hold by villenage, and which was at that time under the dominion of Sweden. She never knew her father, \* but was baptized by the name of Martha, and registered among the bastard-children. The vicar of the parish out of pure charity brought her up till she was fourteen years of age, and then she went to service at Marienbourg where she lived with a Lutheran minister, whose name was Gluk.

At the age of eighteen she married a Swedish dragoon in 1702. The day after her marriage, a party of the Swedish troops were beat by the Moscovites, and the dragoon who was in the action never appeared afterwards, nor could she learn whether he was taken prisoner, nor ever after get any account of him.

Some days after she was taken prisoner herself, and became a servant to general Czeremetof, who gave her to Menzicof, a man who has experienced the vicissitudes of fortune in both extremes, being from a pastry-cook's boy made a general and a prince, and after that deprived of all, and banished to Siberia, where he died overwhelmed with misery and despair.

The Czar was at supper with prince Menzicof when he first saw her and fell in love with her. In 1707, he married her privately, not that she used any artifice to delude him, but because he found in her an astonishing capacity, and a greatness of soul capable of forwarding his designs, and even of continuing them after him. He had long since put away his first wife Ottekesa, daughter of a Boiard, upon a charge of adultery, and also of opposing the changes he had made in the empire; which last was the greater crime of the two in the eyes of the Czar. He would have no body in his family that thought differently from himself. In this foreign slave he expected to meet with all the qualities of a sovereign, though she wanted e-

\* I have since been assured that the father of the Czarina was a ditcher.

very virtue of her sex. For her sake he scorned the common prejudices, by which none but little souls are influenced, and caused her to be crowned empress. The same great capacity, which made her Peter's wife, gave her the empire after the death of her husband; and Europe has seen with surprise, a bold woman, who could neither write nor read, supply the want of strength and education by spirit and bravery, and fill with glory the throne of a legislator.

Upon her marriage with the Czar, she renounced the Lutheran religion, in which she was born, for that of Moscovy, and was baptized according to the rites of the Russian church, instead of Martha assuming the name of Catharine, by which she has been known ever since. This woman, being in the camp at Pruth, held a private council with the general officers, and Shaffirof the vice-chancellor, while the Czar was in his tent.

They agreed, that it was necessary to sue for peace to the Turks, and that the Czar must be persuaded into the proposal. The vice-chancellor wrote a letter to the grand Visir, in the name of his master, which the Czarina, notwithstanding the Emperor's prohibition, carried into the tent to him; and after much dispute, having prevailed upon him by her prayers and tears to sign it; she took all her money and jewels, and every thing of value that she had about her, together with what she could borrow of the general officers, which in all amounted to a considerable present, and sent it with the Czar's letter, to Osman Aga, lieutenant to the grand Visir. Mahomet Baltagi answered haughtily with the air of a Visir and a conqueror, "Let the Czar send me his first minister, and I will see what is to be done." The vice-chancellor Shaffirof came immediately with a present in his hand, which he offered publicly to the grand Visir. It was considerable enough to let him see they stood in need of him, but too little for a bribe.

The grand Visir's first demand was, That the Czar, with all his army, should surrender at discretion. The vice-chancellor made answer, that his master designed to give him battle within a quarter of an hour, and that the Moscovites would all be cut in pieces, rather than submit

to such dishonourable conditions. Osman seconded Shafirof with fresh remonstrances.

Mahomet Baltagi was no soldier. He knew the Janisaries had been repulsed the day before, and was easily persuaded by Osman not to part with certain advantages for the hazard of a battle. He immediately granted a suspension of arms for six hours, and in that time the terms of the treaty were agreed upon and settled.

During the parley there happened an accident, which shews the word of a Turk is often more to be depended on than we imagine. Two Italian gentlemen, related to Mr. Brillo, lieutenant colonel of a regiment of grenadiers in the Czar's service, going to look for forage, were taken by the Tartars, who carried them to their camp, and offered to sell them to an officer of the Janisaries. The Turk enraged at such a breach of the truce, seized the Tartars, and carried them himself before the grand Visir, together with the two prisoners.

The Visir sent the gentlemen back that moment to the Czar, and ordered the principal Tartars concerned in carrying them off to be beheaded.

In the mean time the Kam of Tartary opposed the conclusion of a treaty, which took from him all hopes of pillage. Poniatosky seconded him with very urgent and pressing reasons. But Osman carried his point notwithstanding the impatience of the Tartar, and the insinuations of Poniatosky.

The Visir thought it enough for his master the grand Seignior to conclude an advantageous peace. He insisted, that the Moscovites should give up Asoph, burn the galleys that lay in that port, and demolish the important citadels upon the Palus Maeotis; that the grand Seignior should have all the cannon and ammunition of these fortresses; that the Czar should draw off his troops from Poland, and give no farther disturbance to the few Cossacks that were under the protection of the Poles, nor to those that were subject to Turkey; and that for the future he should pay the Tartars a subsidy of 40000 sequins *per annum*, an odious tribute long since imposed, but from which the Czar had delivered his country.

At length the treaty was going to be signed without

so much as mentioning the King of Sweden: and all that Poniatosky could obtain from the Visir, was to insert an article, by which the Moscovite should promise not to obstruct or incommode the return of Charles XII. and which is pretty remarkable, it was stipulated in this article, that a peace should be concluded between the Czar and the King of Sweden, if they were so disposed, and could agree upon the terms of it.

On these conditions the Czar had liberty to retreat with his army, cannon, artillery, colours and baggage. The Turks furnished him with provisions, and there was plenty of every thing in his camp within two hours after the signing of the treaty, which was begun, concluded and signed the 21st of July 1711.

Just as the Czar, rescued from the difficulty he was under, was drawing off with drums beating, and ensigns displayed, came the King of Sweden, impatient of fighting, and eager to see his enemy in his hands. He had ridden above fifty leagues, from Bender to Jazy, and lighting at count Poniatosky's tent, the count came up to him with a sorrowful countenance, and acquainted him, by what means he had lost an opportunity which perhaps he would never recover.

The King enraged went directly to the grand Visir, and with an air of indignation upbraided him with the treaty he had concluded. I have authority, says the grand Visir with a calm aspect, to wage war and to make peace. But, replies the King, have not you the whole Moscovite army in your power? Our law, says the Visir with great gravity, commands us to grant our enemies peace, when they implore our mercy. Ah! replies the King in a violent emotion, does it order you to clap up a bad treaty when you are in a capacity to make what terms you please? Was it not in your power to carry the Czar prisoner to Constantinople?

The Turk finding himself so briskly attacked answered very coldly, And who shall govern his empire in his absence? It is not fit that all Kings should be out of their kingdoms. Charles replied with a smile full of indignation, and then threw himself down upon a sofa, and looking upon the Visir with an air of resentment, and con-

tempt, he stretched out his leg towards him, and entangling his spur in his robe, which he did by design, tore it; then rose up immediately, mounted his horse, and returned to Bender full of despair.

Poniatolky continued some time longer with the grand Visir, to try if he could not prevail upon him by softer methods to make some better terms with the Czar; but it being then prayer-time, the Turk without giving one word of answer, went to wash and attend his devotions.

*The End of the Fifth Book.*



THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK VI.

The CONTENTS.

*Intrigues at the Porte. Negotiation between King Augustus and the Tartars. The Kam of Tartary and the Bascha of Bender endeavour to force Charles to be gone. He defends himself with forty domestics against the whole army. He is taken.*

**F**ORTUNE, which before had been so favourable to the King of Sweden, bore hard upon him now even in the most trifling things. At his return he found his little camp at Bender, and all his apartment under water, caused by an inundation of the Neister. He retired to some miles distance, near a village called Varnitza; and as if he had had some secret presage of the event that he was afterwards to experience, he built a large house of stone there, capable, upon occasion, of sustaining an assault for some hours. He furnished it also in a very magnificent manner, contrary to his custom, but in order to keep the Turks more in awe.

Besides this, he built two more, one for his chancery, and the other for his favourite Grothusen, who kept a table at his expence. While the King was thus employed in building at Bender, as if he had designed to continue always in Turkey, Baltagi Mahomet, being more apprehen-

five than ever of the intrigues and complaints of this Prince at the Porte, had sent the Emperor of Germany's resident to Vienna, to procure a passage for the King of Sweden through the hereditary territories of the house of Austria. This envoy came back in three weeks time, with a promise from the Imperial Regency, that they would pay Charles XII. all due honours, and conduct him safely into Pomerania.

The reason why the Regency were applied to, was, because Charles who had succeeded Joseph in the Imperial dignity was then in Spain disputing the right of the crown with Philip V. While the German envoy was executing this commission at Vienna, the grand Visir sent three Bashes to the King of Sweden, to acquaint him that he must be gone out of the territories of the Turkish empire.

The King, who knew what they came about, sent them word, that if they ventured to make any proposal contrary to his honour, or to fail in their respects towards him, he would hang them all three up the same hour. The Bashas of Thessalonica, who delivered the message, disguised the roughness of his commission under the most respectful terms. Charles dismissed the audience without vouchsafing one word of answer; but his chancellor Mullern, who staid with the three Bashes, signified his master's refusal to them in a few words, which was nothing but what they had already perceived by his silence.

The grand Visir however was not discouraged: he ordered Ismael Bashas, the new Serasquier of Bender, to threaten the King with the Sultan's resentment, if he did not immediately come to a resolution. The Serasquier was a person of a sweet and winning temper, which had gained him King Charles's good-will, and the friendship of all the Swedes. The King entered into a conference with him, but it was only to let him know, that he would not depart till Achmet had granted him two things, one of which was to punish the grand Visir, and the other to furnish him with 100,000 men in order to return into Poland at the head of them.

Baltagi Mahomet was very sensible, that Charles's stay in Turkey was only to ruin him. For this reason he placed a guard upon all the roads from Bender to Con-

Constantinople, with orders to intercept the King's letters. Besides this he retrenched his *Thaim*, i. e. the provision which the Porte allows the Princes to whom she grants an asylum in her dominions. That of the King of Sweden's was prodigious, amounting to five hundred crowns a day in money, besides a vast excess of every thing that could contribute to maintain a court in plenty and splendor.

As soon as the King heard that the Visir had ventured to retrench his allowance, he turned to the steward of his household, and said, *You have had but two tables hitherto, I command you to prepare four to morrow.*

Charles XIIth's officers had been used to find nothing impossible which their master ordered: but having neither money, nor provision, they were forced to borrow at twenty, thirty, and forty *per cent.* of the officers, domestics and Janisaries, who were grown rich by the King's liberality. M. Fabricius, the envoy of Holstein, gave all that he had; but these supplies would not have sufficed for the space of a month, if one Motraye a Frenchman, who had been upon a long voyage in the Levant, and was come to Bender out of curiosity to see the King, had not offered to go through all the Turkish guards, to borrow money in the King's name at Constantinople.

What letters he had to carry, he put into the cover of a book, having first torn out the past-board, and passed through the midst of the Turks by the name of an English merchant, with his book in his hand, saying it was his prayer-book. The Turks are not very suspicious because not much acquainted with the world. The supposed merchant arrived at Constantinople with the King's letters. But the foreign merchants did not care to venture their money. One Cooke, an Englishman, was the only person who could be prevailed upon; and he readily offered the loan of about 100,000 franks, content to lose them if any misfortune happened to the King of Sweden, and sure to make his fortune if that Prince lived.

The French gentleman had the good fortune to carry the money safe to the camp at Varnitza, and it came just as they were beginning to despair of it.

In the mean time M. de Poniatosky wrote, and that

from the camp of the grand Visir, an account of the campaign of Pruth, wherein he accused Baltagi Mahomet of cowardice and treachery. This account he entrusted to an old Janisary enraged at the Visir's weakness, and moreover gained by Poniatosky's presents, and having obtained permission to leave the camp, he went and presented the letter with his own hands to the Sultan.

Poniatosky set out from the camp some days after, and went to the Ottoman Porte to cabal against the grand Visir as usual.

All circumstances seemed to favour the design. The Czar, now at liberty, was in no haste to perform his promises. It is customary for princes to send golden keys to the Sultan, when they deliver up any towns to the Turks. The keys of Asoph were not come, and the grand Visir, who was responsible for them, being apprehensive of his master's resentment, durst not appear in his presence.

The old Visir Chourloulou, then in banishment at Mitylene, thought this a proper opportunity to deprive Achmet of the throne, and set up Ibrahim the son of Soliman, a young prince who was at that time a prisoner of state in the Seraglio, together with his cousin Mahmoud.

To bring about this design, it was necessary that Mahomet Baltagi should be prevailed upon to endeavour to make the Sultan satisfied with the treaty stipulated with the Czar, and that Baltagi should march directly up to Constantinople with the Janisaries.

Mahomet had no inclination to any rash and hazardous enterprizes: so the old Visir applied himself to Osman Aga his lieutenant, who entirely governed him. But the letters being intercepted Chourloulou and Osman were beheaded, which is reckoned an infamous punishment in Turkey, and their heads were thrown into the hall of the Divan. Among Osman's treasures were found the Czarina's ring, and 20,000 pieces of gold in Saxon, Polish and Moscovite coin.

As to Baltagi Mahomet, he was banished for having been chosen to be the instrument of Chourloulou and Osman's plot, though he never had any such intention. Lemnos was appointed for the place of his exile, and there he died three years after. The grand Seignior did

not seize upon his estate at his death, because he did not die rich; which may serve for a proof, that the Czar had not bought his peace at an immense price, as it was reported in Europe.

To this grand Visir succeeded Jussuf, that is Joseph, whose fortune was no less singular than that of his predecessor's. He was by birth a Moscovite, and being taken prisoner by the Turks at six years of age, together with his family, had been sold to a Janisary. He was long a servant in the Seraglio, but in time became the second person in the empire where he had been a slave. But he was only the shadow of a minister. The young Selictar Ali Coumourgi raised him to this slippery post, in hopes of filling it himself; and Jussuf his creature had nothing else to do, but to set the seal of the empire to what the favourite desired. The politics of the Ottoman court seemed to take a new turn in the beginning of this Visir's ministry. The Czar's plenipotentiaries, who resided at Constantinople both in the quality of ministers, and also as hostages, were better treated than ever. The grand Visir confirmed the peace of Pruth with them. But that which mortified the King of Sweden more than any other circumstance, was the account which he received, that the secret alliance made at Constantinople with the Czar was effected by the mediation of the English and Dutch ambassadors.

Constantinople, after Charles's retreat to Bender, was become what Rome has often been, the center of the negotiations of Christendom. Count Desalleurs, the French ambassador at the Porte, was employed in supporting the interests of Charles and Stanislaus: the Emperor of Germany's minister in opposing them. The Swedish and Moscovite factions clashed, as those of France and Spain have long done at the court of Rome.

England and Holland appeared as neutrals, but were not so. The new trade, which the Czar had opened at Petersburg, had an influence on the views of those two trading nations.

The English and Dutch are always for the prince that favours their traffic most, and the Czar's was then a very advantageous branch of trade; so that it is no wonder the



English and Dutch ministers should operate privately for him at the Porte. One of the conditions of this new alliance was, that Charles should be sent immediately out of the Turkish dominions. Perhaps the Czar was in hopes of seizing his person upon the road, or else he thought Charles less formidable at home than in Turkey, where he was always ready to raise the Ottoman arms against the Russian empire.

The King of Sweden was perpetually soliciting the Porte to send him back through Poland with a numerous army. The Divan indeed were determined to send him back, but it was only with a guard of seven or eight thousand men, not as a King they were disposed to succour, but as a guest they were desirous to be rid of. With this view Sultan Achmet wrote him the following letter.

Most powerful among the Kings that worship Jesus, Redresser of wrongs and injuries, and Protector of Right in the Portes and republics of South and North; shining in Majesty, lover of Honour and Glory, and of our sublime Porte, Charles King of Sweden, whose enterprizes may God crown with success.

**A**S soon as the most illustrious Achmet, formerly Chiaoux Pachi, shall have the honour to deliver you this letter adorned with our Imperial seal, be persuaded and convinced of the truth of our intentions contained therein, viz. That though we had designed to send our ever victorious army against the Czar a second time; yet that Prince, to avoid our just resentment at his delaying the execution of the treaty concluded on the banks of Pruth, and renewed again at our sublime Porte, having surrendered into our hands the castle and city of Asoph, and having endeavoured by the mediation of the English and Dutch ambassadors, our ancient allies, to cultivate a lasting peace with us, we have granted his request, and delivered his plenipotentiaries, who remain with us as hostages, our Imperial ratification, having first received his from their hands.

We have given our inviolable and salutary orders to the most honourable and valiant Delvet Gheria, Han of Boudgiak in Crim Tartary, Noghai and Circassia, and to Ismael

our sage Counsellor and noble Serafquier of Bender, (whom God preserve and augment their magnificence and wisdom) for your return through Poland, according to your first design, which has again been laid before us in your name. You must prepare therefore to set forward the next winter, under the guidance of Providence and with an honourable guard, in order to return to your own territories, taking care to pass through Poland in a peaceable and friendly manner.

You shall be provided with every thing necessary for your journey by my sublime Porte, as well money as men, horses and waggons. But we advise and exhort you above all things, to give the fullest and most expresse orders to all the Swedes and other persons in your retinue, not to make any havock or be guilty of any action that may either directly or indirectly tend to break this peace and alliance.

Hereby you will preserve our good will, of which we shall endeavour to give you as great and frequent proofs as we shall have opportunities. The troops designed to attend you, shall receive orders agreeable to our Imperial intentions in this particular.

Given at our sublime Porte of Constantinople the 14th of the month Rebyul Eureb, 1124. which answers to the 19th of April, 1712.

This letter did not put the King of Sweden intirely out of hopes. He wrote the Sultan word, that he should always acknowledge the favours his highness had heaped upon him; but he added, that he thought the Sultan too just to send him away with no other guard than that of a flying camp, into a country already over-run with the Czar's troops. Indeed the Emperor of Moscovy, notwithstanding he was obliged by the first article of the treaty of Pruth to draw all his forces out of Poland, had sent fresh ones thither; and it seems strange the grand Seignior should know nothing of it.

But the bad policy and vanity of the Porte, in suffering the Christian princes to have their ambassadors at Constantinople, and never keeping so much as a single agent in any Christian court, gives the latter an opportunity of penetrating into, and sometimes of directing the most secret resolutions of the Sultan, and occasions the Di-

van to be always ignorant of the most public transactions in the Christian world.

The Sultan shut up in the Seraglio among his women and his eunuchs, sees only with the eyes of the grand Visir. That minister, as inaccessible as his master, taken up with the intrigues of the Seraglio, and having no correspondence abroad, is for the most part imposed upon himself, or deceives the Sultan, who deposes or orders him to be strangled for the first offence, in order to choose another as ignorant or as treacherous as the former, who behaves like his predecessors, and falls as soon as they.

Such, for the most part, is the negligence and inactivity of this court, that if the Christian princes were to join in a league against the Porte, their fleets would be at the Dardanelles, and their army at the gates of Adrianople, before the Turks could think of putting themselves in a posture of defence. But the different interells that divide Christendom will preserve that people from a fate, for which they seem at present to be ripe by their want of policy, and their ignorance in war and maritime affairs.

Achmet was so little acquainted with what passed in Poland, that he sent an Aga to see whether the Czar's forces were still there or not. Two secretaries of the King of Sweden, who understood the Turkish language, accompanied the Aga, in order to confront him in case of a false report.

This Aga saw the forces with his own eyes, and gave the Sultan a true account of the matter. Achmet in his rage was going to strangle the grand Visir; but the favourite who protected him, and thought he might have occasion for him, obtained his pardon, and kept him some time longer in the ministry.

The Moscovites were openly protected by the Visir, and underhand by Ali Coumourgi, who had changed sides. But the Sultan was so provoked; the infraction of the treaty was so manifest, and the Janisaries, who often make the ministers, favourites and Sultans themselves tremble, called out so loudly for war, that no body in the Seraglio durst offer at a moderate opinion.

The grand Seignior immediately committed the Moscovite ambassadors, already as much used to go to prison

as an audience, to the Seven Towers. War was declared afresh against the Czar, the horse-tails displayed, and orders given to all the Bashas to raise an army of 200,000 fighting men. The Sultan himself quitted Constantinople, and fixed his court at Adrianople, in order to be nearer the seat of the war.

In the mean time a solemn embassy from Augustus and the republic of Poland to the grand Signior was upon the road at Adrianople. At the head of this embassy was the Palatine of Massovia with a retinue of above 300 persons.

These were all seized and imprisoned in the suburbs of the city. Never was the Swedish party fuller of hopes than upon this occasion: but these great preparations came to nothing, and all their expectations were disappointed.

If a public minister of great wisdom and foresight, then residing at Constantinople, is to be credited, young Coumourgi had other things in his head besides hazarding a war with the Czar to gain a desert country. He had thoughts of taking Peloponnesus, now called the Morea, from the Venetians, and making himself master of Hungary.

To put his great designs in execution, he wanted nothing but the office of prime Visir, for which he was yet thought too young. In this view it was of more importance to him to be the Czar's ally than his enemy. It was neither his interest nor his inclination to keep the King of Sweden any longer, much less to raise an army of Turks for him. He was not only for sending that Prince away, but also declared openly, that no Christian minister ought hereafter to be permitted to reside at Constantinople: that the common ambassadors were only honourable spies, who corrupted or betrayed the Visirs, and had too long influenced the intrigues of the Seraglio; that the Franks settled at Pera, and in the towns upon the Levant, were merchants, who had occasion for a consul only, and not an ambassador. The grand Visir, who owed both his dignity and his life to the favourite, and was besides afraid of him, complied with his intentions, and the more readily, because he had sold himself to the Moscovites, and

hoped to be revenged of the King of Sweden, who would have ruined him. The Musti, Ali Coumourgi's creature, was also a slave to his humour. He had given his vote for a war against the Czar, when the favourite was on that side of the question; but as soon as this young man changed his opinion, he declared against it as an unjust motion. Thus the army was scarce raised, when they hearkened to proposals for an accommodation. The vice-chancellor Shaffirof and young Czeremetof, the Czar's plenipotentiaries and hostages at the Porte, promised after several negotiations that ~~the~~ Czar should draw his troops out of Poland. The grand Visir, who was sensible the Czar would not execute this treaty, was resolved however to sign it; and the Sultan content with giving laws to the Moscovites, though only in appearance, continued still at Adrianople. Thus, in the space of less than six months, peace was ratified with the Czar, then war declared, and afterwards peace renewed again.

The main article in all these treaties related to the removal of the King of Sweden. The Sultan would not injure his own honour and that of the Ottoman empire, so far as to expose the King to the danger of being taken up on the road by his enemies. It was stipulated that he should be sent away, but on condition that the ambassadors of Poland and Moscovy should be responsible for the security of his person; and those ambassadors swore in the name of their masters, that neither the Czar nor King Augustus, should molest him in his passage, and Charles on the other hand was not to endeavour to raise any commotions in Poland. The Divan having thus determined Charles's fate, Ismael Serafquier of Bender repaired to Varnitza, where the King was encamped, and acquainted him with the resolutions of the Porte, giving him to understand in a civil manner, that there was no time to delay, but that he must be gone.

Charles made no other answer than this that the grand Seignior had promised him an army, and not a guard; and that Kings ought to keep their word.

In the mean time general Fleming, King Augustus's minister and favourite, maintained a private correspondence with the Kam of Tartary and the Serafquier of



Bender. A German colonel, whose name was la Mare, had more than one journey from Bender to Dresden, to carry messages backward and forward between the Kam and Fleming; and King Augustus had several times been heard to say, in speaking of Charles, *I keep my Bear tied at Bender.*

At this very time the King of Sweden caused a courier sent from Fleming to the Tartarian Prince, to be seized upon the frontiers of Walachia. The letters were carried to him and decyphered. There appeared plain marks of a correspondence between the Tartars and Court of Dresden; but the terms were so general, and ambiguous, that it was difficult to say, whether King Augustus's design was to draw off the Turks from the Swedish party, or to persuade the Kam to deliver up Charles to his Saxons as he attended him on the road to Poland.

'Tis hard to conceive, that so generous a Prince as Augustus, for the sake of seizing the King of Sweden's person, would venture the lives of his ambassadors, and 300 Polish gentlemen detained at Adrianople, as hostages for the security of Charles.

On the other hand, Fleming, absolute over his master, was known for a man of but loose principles, and one that scrupled at nothing. The King of Sweden's treatment of Augustus had been such, as might be thought an excuse for any method of revenge. And if the court of Dresden could buy Charles of the Kam of Tartary, they might believe it no hard matter to purchase the liberty of the Polish hostages at the Ottoman Porte.

These reasons were bandied between the King, Mullern his chancellor, and Grothusen his favourite. They read the letters again and again, and the unhappy situation they were in, increasing their suspicions, they resolved to believe the worst.

Some days after the King was confirmed in his suspicions by the precipitate departure of count Sapieha, who had fled to him for refuge, and now left him abruptly in order to go for Poland, and there throw himself into the arms of Augustus. Upon any other occasion he would have looked upon Sapieha only as a malecontent, but at this nice juncture he made no scruple to believe him a

traitor. The repeated instances, that had been made to him to be gone, raised his suspicions to certainty. The positiveness of his temper, joined to all these probabilities, made him continue firm in the opinion that there was a design to betray him and deliver him up to his enemies, notwithstanding the plot has never yet been proved.

He might be mistaken in thinking King Augustus had made a bargain with the Tartars for his person; but he was much more so in depending upon the assistance of the Ottoman court. But be that as it will, he resolved to gain time.

He told the Bascha of Bender, that he could not go till he was in a condition to pay his debts. For though his Thaim had for a long time been regularly paid, his generosity had always forced him to borrow. The Bascha asked him, how much he wanted? The King answered at a venture, a thousand purses; which amounts to 1500,000 livres of French money full weight. The Bascha wrote to the Porte about it; and the Sultan instead of 1000 purses granted him 1200, which he sent to the Bascha with the following letter.

The grand Seignior's letter to the Bascha of Bender.

**T**HE design of this Imperial letter is to let you know, that upon that of the right noble Delvet Gherai Han, to our sublime Porte, our Imperial munificence has granted the King of Sweden a thousand purses, which shall be sent to Bender under the care and custody of the most illustrious Mahomet Bascha, formerly Chiaoux Pachi, to remain in your hands till such time as the King of Sweden sets out, whose steps God direct, and then to be given him with two hundred purses more, as an overplus of our Imperial liberality beyond what he desires.

As to the rout of Poland, which he is resolved to take, you and the Han, who are to attend him, shall be careful to take such prudent and wise measures, as may, during the whole passage, prevent the troops under your command, and those of the King of Sweden, from committing any havock, or doing any other thing that may be thought a violation of the peace subsisting between our sublime Porte, and the kingdom and re-

public of Poland, so that the King of Sweden may go as a friend under our protection.

By doing this, (which you are to desire of him in positive terms) he will receive all the honour and respect that is due to his majesty from the Poles, as we have been assured by the ambassadors of King Augustus and the Republic, who also on this condition have offered themselves and several others of the Polish nobility, if required, as hostages for the security of his passage.

At the time that you and the right noble Delvet Gherai shall agree upon for the march, you shall put yourself at the head of your brave soldiers, among whom shall be the Tartars, with the Han at the head of them, and shall conduct the King of Sweden and his men.

And may it please the only God, the Almighty, to direct your steps and theirs. The Basba of Aulis shall continue at Bender, with a regiment of Spahis and another of Janisaries, to defend it in your absence. Now by following our Imperial orders and intentions in all these points and articles, you will deserve the continuance of our Imperial favour, as well as the praise and recompence due to all such as observe them.

Given at our Imperial residence at Constantinople the 2d day of the Month Cheval 1124 of the Hegira.

Before the grand Seignior's answer arrived, the King had written to the Porte, to complain of the supposed treachery of the Kam. But the passages were all guarded, and the ministry was against him, so that his letters never came to the Sultan. Nay, the Visir would not suffer M. Defalleurs to come to Adrianople, where the Porte then was, lest that minister, who was the King of Sweden's agent, should endeavour to disconcert their design of sending him away.

Charles enraged to see himself in a manner hunted out of the grand Seignior's territories, resolved not to stir a step.

He might have desired to return through the German territories, or take ship at the Black Sea in order to go to Marseilles through the Mediterranean. But he chose rather to ask nothing, and wait the event.

When the 1200 purses were arrived, his treasurer Grothusen, who by residing so long in Turkey had learnt to speak the language, went to wait upon the Bascha without an interpreter, in hopes to get the 1200 purses from him; and afterwards to form some new intrigue at the Porte; falsely imagining, as they always did, that the Swedish party would at length arm the Ottoman empire against the Czar.

Grothusen told the Bascha, that the King's equipages could not be got ready without money. But we, says the Bascha, shall defray all your expences. Your master will be at no charge, while he continues under my protection.

Grothusen replied, that the difference between the Turkish equipages, and those of the Franks was so great, that they were under a necessity of applying to the Swedish and Polish artificers at Varnitza.

He assured him that his master was willing to go, and that this money would facilitate and hasten his departure. The too credulous Bascha gave him the 1200 purses, and within a few days came and desired the King in a very respectful manner to give orders for their departing.

But he was extremely surprized, when the King told him he was not ready to go, and that he wanted a thousand purses more. The Bascha, confounded with this answer, was speechless for some time, and then went to a window, where he was seen to shed some tears. Afterwards, turning to the King, I shall lose my head, says he, for having obliged your Majesty. I have given you the 1200 purses against the express order of my Sovereign. With these words he took his leave, and was going away full of grief.

The King stopped him, and told him he would make an excuse for him to the Sultan. Ah! replies the Turk, as he was going out, my master can punish faults, but not excuse them.

Ismael Bascha went to acquaint the Kam of Tartary with the news. The Kam having received the same order with the Bascha, not to suffer the 1200 purses to be delivered before the King's departure, and having consented to the delivery of them, was as apprehensive of the grand Seignior's resentment as the Bascha himself. They

wrote both of them to the Porte to clear themselves, and protested that they had not parted with the 1200 purses, but upon a solemn promise made to them by the King's minister, to be gone immediately. And they intreated his Highness not to impute the King's refusal to their disobedience.

Charles persisting in the notion that the Kam and the Basha designed to deliver him up into the hands of his enemies, ordered M. Funk, his envoy at the Ottoman court, to lay his complaints against them before the grand Seignior, and to ask for 1000 purses more. His extreme generosity, and the little account he made of money, hindered him from seeing that there was something base and mean in this proposal. But he did it with a view to be refused, and that he might have a fresh pretence for not departing. But a man must be reduced to strange extremities, before he can stand in need of such artifices. Savari, his interpreter, a crafty enterprizing man, carried his letter to Adrianople, in spite of the grand Visir's care to keep the passages strictly guarded.

Funk was forced to deliver this dangerous message; and all the answer he received was to be clapt up in prison. The Sultan, in a passion, called an extraordinary Divan, and, which is very rarely done, spoke himself upon the occasion. His speech, according to the translation then made of it, was as follows:

" I scarce ever knew the King of Sweden but by his  
 " defeat at Pultowa, and the request he made to me to  
 " grant him a sanctuary in my empire. I have not, I be-  
 " lieve, any need of him, nor any reason to love or fear  
 " him; yet, without consulting any other motives than  
 " the hospitality of a Mussulman, and my own generosi-  
 " ty, which sheds the dew of its favours upon the great  
 " as well as the little, upon strangers as well as my own  
 " subjects, I have received and assisted him, his ministers,  
 " officers and soldiers in every respect, and for three  
 " years and a half have never held my hand from load-  
 " ing him with presents.

" I have granted him a very considerable guard to  
 " conduct him into his own country. He has asked for  
 " 1000 purses to defray some expences, though I pay



" them all. Instead of 1000 I have granted him 1200.  
 " After getting these out of the hands of the Serafquier of  
 " Bender, he desires 1000 more, and refuses to go, un-  
 " der a pretence that the guard is too little, whereas it is  
 " but too large to pass through the country of a friend  
 " and ally.

" I ask you then, whether it be a breach of the laws  
 " of hospitality to send this Prince away, and whether  
 " foreign Princes ought to accuse me of cruelty or in-  
 " justice, in case I should be obliged to make him go by  
 " force?" All the Divan answered, that the grand Seig-  
 " nior might lawfully do what he had said.

The Musti declared that the Mussulmans are not bound to hospitality towards infidels, much less towards the ungrateful, and he granted his Fetfa, a kind of mandate, which for the most part accompanies the important orders of the grand Seignior. These Fetfas are revered as oracles, tho' the persons from whom they come are as much the Sultan's slaves as any others.

The order and the Fetfa were carried to Bender by the Bouiourk Imraour, grand master of the horse, and a Chiaus Basha, first usher. The Basha of Bender received the order at the Kam's, from whence he went immediately to Varnitsa, to know whether the King would go away in a friendly manner, or force him to execute the Sultan's orders.

Charles XII. not used to this threatening language could not command his temper. Obey your master, *says he to the Basha*, if you dare, and be gone out of my presence. The Basha went off in a rage, with a full gallop, contrary to the manner of the Turks; and meeting Fabricius by the way, he called out to him without stopping, the King won't hearken to reason; you will see strange things presently. The same day he discontinued the supply of the King's provisions, and removed the guard of Janisaries. He sent also to the Poles and Cosaques at Varnitsa, to let them know, that if they had a mind to have any provisions, they must leave the King of Sweden's camp, and come and put themselves under the protection of the Porte at Bender. They all obeyed, and left the King, with only the officers of his household, and 300 Swedes, to cope

20000 Tartars and 6000 Turks; and now there was no more provision in the camp either for man or horse.

Immediately the King gave orders to shoot twenty of the fine Arabian horses the grand Seignior had sent him saying, I will neither have their provisions nor their horses. This made noble feast for the Tartars, who, as all the world know, think horse-flesh delicious feeding. In the mean time the Turks and Tartars invetted the little camp on all sides.

The King, with all the calmness in the world, appointed his 300 Swedes to make regular fortifications, and worked at them himself. His chancellor, treasurer, secretaries, *valet de chambres*, and all his domestics, put their hands to the work. Some barricadoed the windows, others fastned beams behind the doors in the form of buttresses.

When the house was well barricadoed, and the King had taken a view of his supposed fortifications, he sat calmly down to chess with his favourite Grothusen, as if every thing had been perfectly safe and secure. It happened very luckily, that Fabricius, the envoy of Holstein, did not lodge at Varnitsa, but at a village between Varnitsa and Bender, where Mr. Jeffreys, the English envoy to the King of Sweden, resided also. The two ministers, seeing the storm ready to break out, took upon them to be mediators between the Turks and the King. The Kam, and especially the Basha of Bender, who had no inclination to offer any violence to the monarch, were glad to receive the offers the two ministers made them. They had two conferences together at Bender, at which the usher of the Seraglio, and the grand master of the horse, who brought the Sultan's order and the Musti's Fetfa, assisted.

Monsieur Fabricius declared to them, that his Swedish majesty had great reason to believe they designed to deliver him to his enemies in Poland. The Kam, and Basha, and the rest, laying their hands upon their heads, called God to witness, that they detested such a horrible piece of treachery, and would lose the last drop of their blood rather than suffer the least failure of respect to the King in Poland. They added, that they had the Mosco-

vite and Polish ambassadors in their hands, whose lives should answer for the least affront that should be offered the King of Sweden. In a word, they complained bitterly that the King should entertain such injurious suspicions of persons, who had so generously received and so handsomely treated him. And though oaths are often the language of treachery, M. Fabricius suffered himself to be persuaded by these barbarians. He thought he perceived such an air of truth in their protestations, as fallshood never imitates but imperfectly. He was sensible there was a correspondence between the Kam of Tartary and King Augustus; but yet he remained convinced that the design of that negotiation was only to force Charles XII. to retire out of the territories of the grand Seignior. But whether Fabricius was mistaken or not, he assured them, he would represent to the King the injustice of these jealousies; but do you intend to force him to be gone? *adds he.* Yes, *says the Basha*, such is our master's order. Then he desired them to consider once again, whether that order was to spill the blood of a crowned head? Yes, *replies the Kam with some warmth*, if that crowned head disobeys the grand Seignior in his own dominions.

In the mean time every thing being ready for the assault, Charles's death seemed inevitable: but the Sultan's command being not positively to kill him in case of resistance, the Basha prevailed upon the Kam to let him send an express that moment to Adrianople, where the grand Seignior then was, to receive his highness's last orders.

M. Jefferys and M. Fabricius, having procured this little respite, ran to acquaint the King with it. They came with that expedition which people usually make who bring good news, but were received very coldly: he called them voluntary, and unauthorized mediators, and still insisted that the Sultan's order and the Musti's Fesfa were forged, because they had sent for fresh orders to the Porte.

The English minister withdrew, resolving to concern himself no more with the affairs of so inflexible a Prince. M. Fabricius, beloved by the King, and more used to his humour than the English minister, staid with him, in or-

der to conjure him not to hazard a life so precious upon so unnecessary an occasion.

The King, instead of an answer, shewed him his fortifications, and desired him to be a mediator only so far as to procure him provisions. Leave was easily obtained from the Turks to let provisions pass to the King's camp, till such time as the courier should arrive from Adrianople.

The Kam himself had forbid his Tartars, tho' always impatient of pillage, to make any attempt upon the Swedes till a new order came, so that Charles went sometimes out of his camp with forty horse, and rode through the midst of the Tartarian troops, who very respectfully left him a free passage: nay he marched directly up their lines, and instead of resisting, they opened to him.

At length the grand Seignior's order being come, to put to the sword all the Swedes that should make the least resistance, and not to spare the life of the King, the Balha had the civility to shew Fabricius the order, to the intent that he might try his utmost to prevail upon Charles. Fabricius went immediately to acquaint him with this bad news. Have you seen the order you speak of? *says the King.* I have, replies Fabricius. Tell them then, *says the King,* that this order is a second forgery of theirs, and that I will not go. Fabricius fell at his feet, put himself in a passion, and reproached him with his obstinacy; but all was to no purpose. Go back to your Turks, *says the King to him smiling,* if they attack me, I know how to defend myself.

The King's chaplains also fell upon their knees before him, conjuring him not to expose the wretched remains of Pultowa, and, above all, his own sacred person to certain death; adding besides, that resistance in this was a most unwarrantable action, and that it was a violation of the laws of hospitality to resolve to continue with strangers against their will, who had so long and generously supported him. The King, who had shewed no resentment against Fabricius, grew warm upon this occasion, and told his priests, that he took them to pray for him, and not to give him advice.

General Hard and general Dardoff, whose opinion it had always been not to venture a battle, which in the

consequence must prove fatal, shewed the King their breasts, covered with wounds they received in his service; and assuring him, that they were ready to die for him, begged that it might at least be upon a more necessary occasion. I know, *says the King*, by your wounds and my own, that we have fought valiantly together. You have hitherto done your duty: do it again now. There was nothing more to be said; they must obey. Every one was ashamed not to court death with the King. His majesty, being prepared for the assault, entertained himself in secret with the pleasure and honour of sustaining the shock of a whole army with 300 Swedes. He appointed every man to his post. His chancellor Mullern, the secretary Empreus, and his clerks, were to defend the chancery-house. Baron Fief, at the head of the officers of the kitchen, was at another post. The grooms of the stables and the cooks had another place to guard. For with him every man was a soldier. He rode from his fortifications to his house, promising rewards to every body, creating officers, and declaring, that he would make the lowest of his servants captains, if they behaved with courage in the engagement.

It was not long before they saw the Turks and Tartars advancing in order of battle to attack the little fortress, with ten pieces of ordnance and two mortar-pieces. The horse-tails waved in the air, the clarions sounded, the cries of Alla, Alla, were heard on all sides. Baron Grothusen took notice that the Turks did not mix any abusive language against the King in their cries, but only called him *Demir-bash*, which signifies *head of iron*, and resolved that moment to go alone and unarmed out of the fortifications. He advanced up to the line of the Janisaries, who had almost all of them received money from " them. Ah, what my friends! *says he to them in their own language*, are you come to massacre 300 defenceless " Swedes? You brave Janisaries, who have pardoned " 100,000 Moscovites upon their crying Amman, (i. e. " pardon) to you: have you forgot the kindness you have " received from us? And would you assassinate that great " King of Sweden, whom you loved so much, and who has " been so generous to you? My friends, he asks but three



"days, and the Sultan's orders are not so strict as you are made to believe."

These words produced an effect which Grothusen himself did not expect. The Janisaries swore upon their beards, they would not attack the king, and that they would give him the three days he demanded. In vain was the signal given for the assault. The Janisaries far from obeying, threaten to fall upon their leaders, if three days were not granted to the King of Sweden. They came to the Bascha of Bender's tent in a body, crying out that the Sultan's orders were forged. To this unexpected insurrection the Bascha had nothing to oppose but patience.

He made as if he was pleased with the generous resolution of the Janisaries, and ordered them to retreat to Bender. The Kam of Tartary, who was a hot forward man, would have given the assault immediately with his troops; but the Bascha, who did not design the Tartars alone should have the honour of taking the King, when he perhaps might be punished for the disobedience of his Janisaries, perswaded the Kam to wait till the next day.

The Bascha returned to Bender, assembled all the officers of the Janisaries and the oldest soldiers, and both read to them, and shewed them the positive order of the Sultan, and the Musti's Fetfa.

Sixty of the oldest of them, with venerable gray beards, who had received a thousand presents from the King's hand, offered to go in person to him, and intreat him to put himself into their hands, and permit them to serve him as guards.

The Bascha consented to it; for there was no expedient he would not try, rather than be forced to kill the King. Accordingly these sixty old soldiers went the next morning to Varnitsa, having nothing in their hands but long white staves, the only arms of the Janisaries, when they are not going to fight: for the Turks look upon it as a barbarous custom among the Christians to wear swords in time of peace, and enter armed into their churches and the houses of their friends.

They addressed themselves to baron Grothusen and Chancellor Mullern: they told them, they were come

with a design to serve as faithful guards to the King; and that, if he pleased, they would conduct him to Adrianople, where he might speak to the grand Seignior in person. While they were making this proposal, the King read the letters that were brought from Constantinople, and which Fabricius, who could not see him any more, had conveyed privately to him by a Janissary. These letters were written by count Poniatosky, who could neither serve him at Bender nor Adrianople, having been detained at Constantinople, by order of the Porte, from the time of his imprudent demand of the 1000 purses. He told the King, that the Sultan's orders to seize or massacre his royal person, in case of resistance, were but too true; that the Sultan indeed was imposed upon by his ministers; but the more he was imposed upon in this affair, the more he would be obeyed; that he must submit to the times, and yield to necessity: that he took the liberty to advise him to try if it were possible to prevail upon the ministers by way of negotiation; and not to be inflexible in a case where the softest methods were required; and to expect from time and good management the cure of an evil which by rough and violent handling would be increased beyond the hopes of a recovery.

But neither the proposal of the old Janissaries, nor Poniatosky's letters, could in the least convince the King that it was possible for him to give way without injuring his honour. He chose rather to die by the hand of the Turks, than be in any manner their prisoner. He dismissed the Janissaries without seeing them, and sent them word, that if they did not go about their business, he'd shave their beards for them; which, in the East, is reckoned the most provoking affront that can be offered.

These old soldiers, fired with resentment, returned home crying, as they went: Ah this head of iron! Since he is resolved to perish, let him perish. They gave the Basha an account of their commission, and acquainted their comrades at Bender, with the strange reception they had met with. Upon this every one swore to obey the Basha's orders without delay; and they were now as impatient of going to the assault as they had been averse to it the day before.

The word was given that moment. They marched up to the intrenchments. The Tartars were already waiting for them, and the cannon began to play.

The Janisaries on one side, and the Tartars on the other, forced this little camp in an instant. Twenty Swedes had scarce time to draw their swords, before the whole 300 were surrounded and taken prisoners without resistance. The King was then on horseback between his house and his camp, with the generals Hard, Dardoff, and Sparre; and seeing that all his soldiers had suffered themselves to be taken before his eyes, he said in cool blood to those three officers, Let us go and defend the house. *We'll fight*, adds he with a smile, *pro aris et focis*.

Immediately he gallops up to the house with them, where he had placed about forty domestics and centinels, and which they had fortified in the best manner they could.

These generals, however accustomed to the obstinate intrepidity of their master, could not help being surprized, that in cool blood, and with a jesting air, he should resolve to stand out against ten pieces of cannon and a whole army. They followed him with some guards and domestics, to the number of twenty persons.

But when they came to the door, they found it beset with Janisaries. Besides, near 200 Turks or Tartars had already got in at a window, and made themselves masters of all the apartments, except a great hall, whither the King's domestics had retired. It happened luckily that this hall was near the door, at which the King purposed to enter with his little troop of twenty persons. He threw himself off his horse with pistol and sword in hand, and his followers did the same.

The Janisaries fell upon him on all sides, being encouraged by the Bascha's promise of eight ducats of gold to each man that should but touch his clothes, in case they could take him. He wounded and killed all who came near him. A Janisary, whom he had wounded, clapped his blunderbuss to his face, and if the arm of a Turk had not jostled him, occasioned by the crowd, that moved backwards and forwards like waves, the King had been killed. The ball grazed upon his nose, and took off

a piece of his ear, and then broke general Hard's arm, whose fate it was to be always wounded by his master's side.

The King stuck his sword into the Janifary's breast, and at the same time his domestics, who were shut up in the great hall, opened the door to him. He enters as swift as an arrow with his little troop, and in an instant they shut the door again, and barricade it with all they can find.

Thus was Charles XII. shut up in this hall with all his attendants, amounting to about threescore men, officers, guards, secretaries, *valet de chambres* and domestics of all kinds.

The Janifaries and Tartars pillaged the rest of the house, and filled the apartments. Come, says the King, let us go and drive out these barbarians! And putting himself at the head of his men, he, with his own hands, opened the door of the hall which faced his bed-chamber, goes into it and fires upon the plunderers.

The Turks loaden with booty, being terrified at the sudden appearance of the King, whom they had been used to reverence, threw down their arms, and leapt out of the window, or fled into the cellars. The King taking advantage of the confusion they were in, and his own men being animated with this piece of success, they pursued the Turks from chamber to chamber, killed or wounded those who had not made their escape, and in a quarter of an hour cleared the house of the enemy.

The King in the heat of the fight perceived two Janifaries who hid themselves under his bed. He thrust his sword through one of them and killed him; but the other asked pardon, crying, *Amman*. I grant you your life, says the King, upon condition that you go and give the Basha a faithful account of what you have seen. Grothusen explained the words in Turkish to him. The Turk easily promised to do as he was bid. Upon which he was allowed to leap out of the window, as the rest had done.

The Swedes, at length became masters of the house, shut the windows again, and barricadoed them. In this situation they had no want of arms, a ground-chamber full of muskets and powder, having escaped the tumultuous search of the Janifaries. These they made a very

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seasonable use of, firing close upon the Turks through the windows, and killing two hundred of them in less than half a quarter of an hour.

The cannon played against the house; but the stones being very soft, it only made holes in the wall, but demolished nothing.

The Kam of Tartary and the Bascha, who were desirous of taking the King alive, being ashamed to lose time and men, and employ an entire army against sixty persons, thought it proper to set fire to the house, in order to oblige the King to surrender. For this purpose they ordered some arrows, twisted about with lighted matches, to be shot upon the roof, and against the doors and windows; by which means the house was immediately in a flame. The roof all on fire was ready to tumble upon the Swedes. The King, with a very sedate air, gave orders to extinguish the fire; and finding a little barrel full of liquor, he laid hold of it himself, and, with the assistance of two Swedes, threw it upon the place where the fire was most violent: then he discovered that it was full of brandy. But the hurry, which is inseparable from such a state of confusion, hindered him from thinking of it before. Upon this it burnt more furiously than ever: The King's apartment was consumed, and the great hall, where the Swedes then were, was filled with a terrible smoke, mixed with gusts of fire, that came in through the doors of the neighbouring apartments. One half of the roof fell in, cracking among the flames, and the other tumbled down without the house.

A centinel named Walberg, ventured in this extremity to cry, that there was a necessity for surrendering. What a strange man, says the King, is this, to imagine that it is not more glorious to be burnt than taken prisoner! Another centinel named Rosen, had the thought to say, that the chancery-house, which was but fifty paces off, had a stone roof, and was proof against fire; that it would do well to sally out and gain that house, and there stand upon their defence. A true Swede, cries the King: then he embraced him, and made him a colonel upon the spot. Come on, my friends, says he, take all the powder



and ball you can carry, and let us gain the chancery sword in hand.

The Turks, who all this while encompassed the house, were struck with fear and admiration, to see that the Swedes continued in it notwithstanding it was all in flames. But they were much more surprized, when they saw them open the doors, and the King and his men fall upon them in a desperate manner. Charles, and his principal officers were armed with sword and pistol. Every one fired two pistols at a time in the instant that the door opened; and in the twinkling of an eye throwing away their pistols, and drawing their swords, they drove the Turks back the distance of fifty paces; but the moment after this little troop was surrounded. The King, being booted according to custom, threw himself down with his spurs. Immediately one and twenty Janisaries fell upon him, disarm him, and bear him away to the Basha's quarters, some taking hold of his arms, and others of his legs, as the manner is to carry a sick person for fear of incommoding him.

As soon as the King saw himself in their hands, the violence of his temper, and the fury which so long and desperate a fight would naturally inspire, gave place to a gentle and calm behaviour. Not one impatient word fell from him; not a frown was to be seen. On the contrary he looked upon the Janisaries with a smiling countenance, and they carried him crying *Alla*, with a mixture of anger and respect in their faces. His officers were taken at the same time, and stripped by the Turks and Tartars. It was on the 12th of February, 1713, that this strange adventure happened, and it drew after it some very extraordinary consequences.

*The End of the Sixth Book.*

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THE  
HISTORY.  
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CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK VII.

The CONTENTS.

*The Turks remove King Charles to Demitocca. King Stanislaus taken at the same time. A bold undertaking of M. de Villelongue. Revolution in the Seraglio. Battles in Pomerania. The Swedes burn Altena. Charles returns to his kingdom. His strange manner of travelling. His arrival at Straelsund. The state of Europe at that time. The losses of King Charles. The successes of Peter the Great. And his triumphant entry into Petersburg.*

THE Basha of Bender gravely waited in his tent, expecting the King; and had by him one Marco for an interpreter. He received the King with great respect, and prayed him to repose upon a sopha, but the King took no notice of his civilities, and continued standing.

*Blessed be the Almighty, says the Basha, that your majesty is safe. It grieves me that you have forced me to execute the Sultan's orders. The King, for his part, was only vexed that his 300 men should suffer themselves to be taken in their intrenchments, and said, Ah if they had fought like men, we could have held it out those ten days. Alas, says the Basha, what pity it is, that so much valour should be misemployed! Then the King was conducted on*

a fine horse with rich furniture to Bender. All the Swedes were either killed or taken. The King's equipage, goods and papers, and the best of his baggage, was plundered or burnt. In the roads, the Swedish officers naked, and chained two and two, followed the horses of the Tartars and Janisaries. The chancellor and the general officers were in the same condition of being slaves to some of the soldiers, to whose share they fell.

But the most unfortunate of all the prisoners was young Federick, the first *valet de chambre* to the King who had saved his life at Pultowa, and had the courage to assist count Poniatosky in carrying his master three miles through the midst of his conquering enemies. Federick, in this action of Bender, maintained the reputation which he had first acquired at Pultowa. He fought by his master's side, and was not taken till he had killed a dozen Turks with his own hand. He was said to be as strong a man as King Augustus; to these extraordinary gifts of nature in him was added an uncommon beauty, which occasioned his unhappy end. Several of the Tartars were disputing who should have him; and in the rage of battle and of an odious passion, not being able to agree, they fell upon the poor young man, and cut him in two with their sabres.

The Basha Ismael, having brought the King to his Seraglio at Bender, gave him his own apartment, where he was served like a King, but not without a guard of Janisaries at the chamber door. A bed was prepared for him; but he threw himself down upon a sofa in his boots, and fell fast asleep. An officer, that stood near in waiting, put on him a cap, which the King threw off at his first waking; and the Turk was surprized to see a sovereign Prince sleeping on the ground in his boots, and bare-headed. In the morning Ismael brought Fabricius to the King; who when he saw his Prince's clothes all torn, his boots, his hands, and his whole person covered with dust and blood, his eye-brows burnt, but yet even in that condition smiling; he threw himself on his knees, unable to speak: but soon recovering by the King's free behaviour, he renewed his usual way of conversation with him, and they began to be a little merry upon the subject of the battle. *I am told, says Fabricius, your majesty has killed no less than*

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*twenty Janisaries. No, no, says the King, you know a story never loses in the telling.* While they were talking, the Bascha brought to the King his favourite Grothusen and colonel Ribbins, whom he was so generous to redeem at his own expence. Fabricius undertook to ransom all the other prisoners.

Jeffreys, the English envoy, assisted him with money: and La Motraye, a French gentleman who came out of curiosity to Bender, and who has writ some account of these affairs, gave all he had. These strangers, assisted by the Bascha's advice and money, redeemed all the officers, and their clothes, out of the hands of the Turks and Tartars.

The next morning they conveyed the King in a chariot covered with scarlet towards Adrianople. His treasurer Grothusen was with him. The chancellor Mullern, and some officers followed in another carriage. Many others were on horseback, who could not refrain tears at the sight of the King's chariot. The Bascha himself commanded the convoy. Fabricius said it was a shame the King should be without a sword, and begged of the Bascha that he might be allowed to wear one. *God forbid!* says the Bascha, *he would soon cut our beards for us, if he had a sword.* However, he gave him one some hours after.

While they were carrying this King disarmed and a prisoner, who not long before had given law to so many countries, had been arbiter of the North, and the terror of all Europe, there happened to appear in the very same place another instance of the frailty of human greatness.

King Stanislaus was seized in the Turks dominions, and carried prisoner to Bender at the same time that they were conveying Charles to Adrianople.

Stanislaus, unsupported by the hand that made him King, having no money, and consequently no friends in Poland, retired to Pomerania, and as he was not able to preserve his own kingdom, had done his best to defend his benefactor's.

He went himself to Sweden to hasten the recruits that were wanted in Livonia and Pomerania. At last, when he had done all that could be expected from him as the King of Sweden's friend, and struggled with his ill fortune,

he thought it best to give up a crown which he was no longer able to keep. He advised about it with Fleming first minister to King Augustus, who was under great obligations to him, and made him large promises, if not out of gratitude, at least for his honour's sake, or, which is the more probable, with intention only to deceive him.

But Stanislaus could not well abdicate his crown without the consent of Charles, to whom he owed it. So he wrote to him, to desire he would allow of an abdication, which many circumstances made necessary, and his good meaning in it honourable. He begged he would no longer sacrifice his interest for the sake of an unhappy friend, who would rather choose to be himself a sacrifice for the public peace.

Charles received the letter at Varnitza; and in a passion said to the courier before a good many people: *Well, if he will not be a King, I shall think of somebody else.* Stanislaus thought if he should go himself it might do better. So he took with him baron Sparre, who was afterwards the Swedes ambassador in France. He changed his clothes, for fear of being known, and passed the borders of Hungary and Transylvania, still in fear of being stopped; nor could he think himself safe, till he came to Iassi in Moldavia, near the place where the Czar had such a narrow escape from the Turks. At Iassi he was stopped, and questioned. He said he was a Swede, and going to the King at Bender; for he supposed that name was enough to gain his pass, little thinking what had happened.

Saying he was a Swede, they immediately seized him, and carried him prisoner to Bender. He was quickly known; and word was brought of it to the Basha as he was going along with the King of Sweden. The Basha told Fabricius, who coming up to the chariot acquainted Charles, that he was not the only King a prisoner to the Turks; and that Stanislaus was in hold a few miles from him. The King not at all discomposed, said to him, *Dear Fabricius, run and tell him, never to make peace with King Augustus, for we shall quickly have a change of affairs.* Such was his firmness of mind, that though deserted in Poland, attacked in his own dominions, and led prisoner here in Turkey, he boldly reckoned upon fortune, not

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doubting but the Ottoman Porte would assist him with 100,000 men.

Fabricius had leave to go with the message, attended by a Janissary. After some miles riding, he met a body of soldiers that guarded Stanislaus, and spoke to one that rode in the middle of them, in a Frank's dress, and indifferently mounted. He asked him in the German tongue, where the King of Poland was? It proved to be Stanislaus, whom he did not know in that disguise. *What, says the King, have you forgot me?* Fabricius then told him of the King of Sweden's sad condition, and of his unshaken, but unsuccessful resolution.

When Stanislaus came near Bender, the Bascha, who was returning back from Charles, sent the King of Poland an Arabian horse with fine furniture.

Stanislaus was received at Bender with a discharge of the artillery, and bating that he was a prisoner, had no great cause to complain of his usage there. As for Charles, he was going to Adrianople, and the town was full of discourse beforehand about the battle. The Turks both admired and blamed him; but the Divan was so exasperated, that they threatned to confine him in one of the islands of the Archipelago.

M. Desalleurs, that could have taken his part and prevented such an affront to all the Kings of Christendom, was at Constantinople; and so was M. de Poniatosky, who was never known to want contrivance upon any pressing occasion. Most of the Swedes at Adrianople were in prison, and the Sultan's throne seemed inaccessible to any complaints from the King of Sweden.

The marquis de Fierville, a private agent from France to King Charles at Bender, was then at Adrianople, and undertook to do that Prince a piece of service when he was either deserted or ill used by all the world; he was luckily assisted in this design by a French gentleman, of a good family, one Villelongue a man of great courage and but little fortune, who, charmed with the fame of the King of Sweden, was come thither on purpose to engage in his service.

With this young man's help M. de Fierville wrote a memorial as from the King of Sweden, demanding justice

of the Sultan for the wrong offered in his person to all crowned heads, and against the real, or suspected treachery of the Kam and the Bascha of Bender.

It contained an accusation of the Visir and other ministers, that they were corrupted by the Moscovites, had deceived the grand Seignior, had intercepted his letters, and had cunningly drawn from the Sultan an order so contrary to the hospitality of the Mussulmans, in violation of the law of nations, and in a manner so unworthy of a great Emperor, to attack with twenty thousand men a King who had none but his retinue to defend him, and who had depended upon the sacred word of the Sultan.

When they had drawn up this memorial, it was to be translated, and written upon a sort of paper that they never use but for what is presented to the Sultan.

They went to several French interpreters to get it done. But the King's affairs were so desperate, and the Visir so openly declared his enemy, that none of them all would undertake it. They found out a stranger at last whose hand was not known: who, for a good gratuity, and upon full assurance of secrecy, translated the memorial, and wrote it over upon the right sort of paper. The baron d' Arvidson, a Swedish officer, counterfeited the King's hand, and Fierville sealed it with the arms of Sweden. Villelongue undertook to deliver it to the grand Seignior as he passed to the mosque. This was no more than had been done before, by people who had complaints to make against the minister of state: but that made it now the more difficult and dangerous.

The Visir, who could not but think the Swedes would sue for justice to the Sultan, and knew withal what was like to follow, by the fate of his predecessors, forbade any person to come near the grand Seignior, and ordered, that whoever was seen about the mosque with petitions should be seized. Villelongue knew the order, and that it was as much as his life was worth to do it. However, he put on a Grecian habit, and hiding the letter in his bosom, went pretty early to the place. He pretended madness, and danced between two files of Janisaries where the Sultan was to pass; and dropped some money now and then to amuse the guards.

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When the Sultan was coming they would have had Villelongue go out of the way; but he fell on his knees, and struggled with the Janisaries. At last his cap fell off, and he was discovered by his hair to be a Frank. He had several blows, and was very ill used. The grand Seignior heard the scuffle, and asked what the matter was? Villelongue cried as loud as he could, Amman! Amman! Mercy! and pulled out the letter. The Sultan ordered him to be brought before him. Villelongue ran immediately, and embracing his stirrup, presented the paper, saying, *Sued Kral Dan. The King of Sweden gives it thee.* The Sultan, putting up the letter in his bosom, went on to the mosque, and Villelongue was secured in one of the out houses of the Seraglio.

The Sultan, coming from the mosque, when he had read the letter, resolved to examine the prisoner himself. He put off his Imperial habit and turban, and went in the disguise of an officer of the Janisaries, which he often does, taking with him an old Maltese for an interpreter. By the favour of this disguise, Villelongue had a private conference of a quarter of an hour with the Turkish Emperor, an honour that was never done to any Christian ambassador. He took care to relate all the King of Sweden's hardships, accusing the ministers, and demanding satisfaction: this he did with the greater freedom, because all the while he talked to the Sultan, he was thought to believe himself speaking to his equal. Not but he knew him well, though the prison was pretty dark; and this made him only the more bold in his discourse. The pretended officer of the Janisaries said to Villelongue, Christian, be satisfied, the Sultan my master has the soul of an Emperor, and if it be as you say, he will do your King justice. Villelongue was soon released, and some weeks after there was a sudden change in the Seraglio, which the Swedes affirm was owing to this conference. The Musti was deposed; the Kam of the Tartars banished to Rhodes, and the Serafquier Basha of Bender sent to an island in the Archipelago.

The Ottoman Porte is so very subject to such storms, that it is hard to say, whether this was intended for satisfaction to the King of Sweden or not; his treatment

sheweth but little inclination in the Porte to pleasure him.

Ali Coumourgi, the favourite, was thought to be at the bottom of all for some private ends of his own. The pretence for banishing the Kam and the Serafquier of Bender, was their giving the King twelve hundred purses against the express order of the grand Seignior. He raised the son of the deposed Kam to the Tartarian throne, a young man, who cared little for his father; and upon whose assistance Ali Coumourgi greatly depended in the wars he had already premeditated. It was some weeks after this, that the grand Visir Jussuf was deposed, and that Soliman Basba was declared prime Visir.

I must say, that M. de Villelongue, and many Swedes, have assured me, that the letter he presented was the occasion of these changes; but M. de Fierville says quite otherwise: and this is not the only case in which I have met with differing accounts. Now I take it, an historian is to tell plain matter of fact, without entering into the motives: he is to relate exactly what he knows, and not to guess at what it is impossible he should know.

In the mean time Charles was carried to a little castle called Demirtash, near Adrianople, where multitudes of Turks were waiting to see him alight. He was conveyed out of the chariot to the castle upon a sofa; but that he might not be seen, he put a cushion over his head.

It was several days before the Porte would consent to his residing at Demotica, a little town six leagues from Adrianople, near the famous river Hebrus, now called Marizza. At last Coumourgi said to Soliman the grand Visir, *Go, tell the King of Sweden he may stay at Demotica as long as he lives. I warrant he will be for removing before the year comes about; but be sure you do not let him have any money.*

So the King was removed to Demotica, where the Porte allowed a sufficient quantity of provisions for him and his retinue, and only five and twenty crowns a day in money, to buy pork and wine, a sort of provision which the Turks never furnish to others. But as to the allowance of five hundred crowns a day, which he had at Bender, it was quite withdrawn.

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Demotica, Soliman the grand Visir was deposed, and succeeded by Ibrahim Molla, a man exceeding rough, and bold and blunt. It may not be amiss to give some account of him, that all the Viceroy's of that empire may be known, on whom King Charles's fortune was so long depending.

He had been a common sailor till the accession of Sultan Achmet the third: which Emperor would often go disguised like a common man, or as a priest, or Dervis: and would slip in an evening into coffee-houses and other public places of Constantinople, to hear what was said of him, and how people stood affected. He over-heard this sailor once finding fault with the Turkish ships, that they never brought home any prizes, and swore, if he were a captain, he would never come home without some ship or other of the Infidels. The very next morning the grand Seignior gave him a ship, and sent him a cruising. In a few days after, the captain brought in a bark of Malta, and a Genoese galley, and in two years time he came to be captain-general of the sea, and at last grand Visir. He was no sooner in his post, but he began to think he might do without the favourite; and to make himself necessary, he promoted a war with the Moscovites. In order to this, he set up a tent near the castle where the King of Sweden lived.

There he invited the King to meet him with the new Kam of Tartary and the French ambassador. The King's misfortunes made him the more sensible of the indignity, to be sent for by a subject; so he ordered his chancellor Mullern to go in his room: and because he did not know but the Turks might offer some affront to him, and force him to something below his dignity, this Prince, who carried every part of his conduct into extremes, resolved to keep his bed during his stay at Demotica. This he did for ten months as if he had been sick. None but the chancellor, Grothusen, and colonel Dubens ever eat with him. They had no conveniences about them since the business of Bender, so that their meals were served with little elegance. They were forced to wait upon themselves, and the chancellor Mullern was cook in ordinary the whole time.



While Charles kept his bed in this manner, he received news of the desolation of all his foreign dominions.

General Steinbock, famous for driving the Danes from Scania, and with a parcel of peasants, beating all their best troops, did still maintain the glory of the Swedish arms. He defended Pomerania, Bremen, and the King's possessions in Germany, as long as he was able, but could not hinder the Saxons and Danes united, from passing the Elbe, and besieging Stade, a strong town near that river in the dutchy of Bremen. It was bombarded and burnt to ashes, and the garrison obliged to surrender at discretion, before Steinbock could come in to their assistance.

He had about twelve thousand men, and half of them were cavalry, with which he pursued the enemy, though they were twice his number, and forced them to repass the Elbe; and came up with them at a place called Gadebush, near a river of that name, in the dutchy of Mecklenbourg, on the 20th of December 1712. The Saxons and Danes were posted with a marsh before them, and a wood behind; and had all advantages both of number and situation: for there was no coming at them but over the marsh, through the fire of their artillery.

Steinbock led on his troops, and advancing in order of battle, began one of the most bloody engagements that had ever happened between those rival nations. After a sharp encounter of three hours, the Danes and Saxons were defeated and left the field.

It was here that a son of King Augustus by the countess de Konismarck, known by the name of the count of Saxony, received his first rudiments of the art of war; I mean him that had the honour to be chosen duke of Courland, though without success, who wanted nothing but force to make good the most indisputable right that any man can have to dominion, which is the unanimous consent of a people. He commanded a regiment at Gadebush, and had a horse killed under him. I have heard him say, that all the Swedes maintained their ranks, and even when the day was decided, and their enemies dead at their feet, not one of those brave soldiers durst stoop to strip them, till prayers were over in the field of battle: they were so

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very exact in observing that strict discipline their King had always used them to.

After this victory, Steinbock could not but remember how the Danes had reduced Stade to ashes; and resolved to be revenged upon Altena, a town belonging to the King of Denmark. Altena is below Hamburg upon the river Elbe, which brings up large vessels thither. The King of Denmark had granted to it great privileges, with an intention to make it a place of considerable trade. With this encouragement, the people had so much improved their trade and encreased their riches, as to make the Hamburgers jealous of their growing wealth, and begin to wish their destruction. When Steinbock came in sight of the place, he sent a trumpet to bid them evacuate it with their effects, for he was resolved to destroy their town immediately.

The magistrates came and threw themselves at his feet, and offered him a ransom of a hundred thousand crowns. Steinbock demanded twice the sum. They begged they might have time to send to their correspondents at Hamburg, and promised he should have by the next day. The general told them if they did not pay it presently, he would burn the town about their ears.

The soldiers were in the suburbs ready with their torches; and the town had no defence but a poor wooden gate and a dry ditch; so that they were forced to fly at midnight. It was on the 9th of January 1713. The season was extremely cold, and a violent north wind helped to spread the flames, and to increase the sufferings of the people exposed in the open fields. Men and women loaded with their goods, went weeping and lamenting through the snow. Bed-ridden old people were carried by the young upon their shoulders. Women newly brought to bed escaped with their infants to die of cold upon the road, in sight of their country that was all in flames. The Swedes set fire to the town, before the people were well got out of it. It burnt from midnight till about ten in the morning. The houses being most of timber were easily consumed, so that by morning there was scarce any sign remaining of a town.

The aged, the sick, and women of tender constitutions,

who had lodged upon the ice while their houses were burning, came to Hamburg, and begged they might be let in to save their lives: but were refused, because Altena had been visited with some infectious distempers, and the inhabitants of Altena were not in such esteem with the Hamburgers, as to induce them to expose themselves to the infection of that unfortunate people by admitting them into the city. Thus most of these poor wretches died under the walls, calling Heaven to witness the barbarity of the Swedes, and more inhuman Hamburgers.

All Germany was scandalized at this proceeding. The ministers and generals of Poland and Denmark wrote to Steinbock, complaining of his cruelty, which being done without necessity, could have no excuse, but must set God and man against him.

His answer was, " That he had never carried things  
 " to these extremities, if it were not to deter his master's  
 " enemies from making war for the future like barbarians,  
 " and to teach them some regard to the law of nations:  
 " adding, that they had filled Pomerania with their cru-  
 " elties, and when they had ruined that beautiful country,  
 " they sold a hundred thousand people to the Turks;  
 " that his torches at Altena were no more than just re-  
 " prisals for the red hot bullets they had used at Stade:  
 " That war was not the theatre of moderation and leni-  
 " ty: that neither Louis XIVth, who allowed the burn-  
 " ing of the Palatinate, nor Turenne who had laid it in  
 " ashes, nor those who had followed and exceeded his  
 " example since, were ever thought to be more barbarous  
 " than other men; and if there was any blame in such  
 " things, it must lye upon the Moscovites, the Danes and  
 " Saxons, who had set him the example."

On these terms of violence the Swedes and their enemies acted against each other; and if Charles could but have appeared then in Pomerania, he might possibly have retrieved his former fortune. His armies, though they wanted his presence among them, were yet acted by his spirit; but the absence of the chief has a fatal influence on military affairs, and prevents the right improvement of conquest. So that Steinbock lost by piece-meal all he

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had gained in those great actions, which at a better season might have been decisive.

With all his successes, it was not in his power to prevent the Moscovites, the Saxons and Danes from joining: they seized his quarters; and he lost several of his men in little skirmishes: two thousand of them were drowned in the Eider, as they were going to their winter quarters in Holstein: and these were losses not to be recovered in a country where he was surrounded on all sides by potent enemies.

Frederick duke of Holstein, was then but twelve years old; he was nephew to the King of Sweden, and son of that duke who was killed at the battle of Cliffo. His uncle the bishop of Lubeck, under the name of administrator, governed this unhappy country which its sovereigns have very seldom possessed in peace. The bishop, who was anxious to avert war from the dominions of his pupil, was willing to preserve the appearance of a neutrality, but it was impossible to remain neuter between an army of the King of Sweden, whom the duke of Holstein might hope to succeed, and that of the allies, which was just upon the point to invade them.

Count Steinbock being hardly pressed, and in no condition to keep the field, demanded of the bishop to admit him into the castle of Tonningen, who was now reduced either to venture the loss of all the Swedish forces, or the consequences of the Danes resentment, in case he should assist them.

So he had recourse to art, the mean and dangerous refuge of weak minds, and ordered Wolf the governor to receive the Swedish troops, but never to say any thing of such an order from him. Steinbock was also sworn to keep it secret.

Wolf was to take the blame of all upon himself, as having disobeyed his master's orders. But Steinbock, the duke, and all his country paid dear for his contrivance. The Czar, with the Kings of Denmark and Prussia, blocked up Tonningen: and this little army was disappointed of provisions by a fatality which attended the affairs of Sweden through the course of this whole war.

Steinbock was forced at last to surrender himself a pri-

soner to the King of Denmark on the 17th of March 1713, and thus was the army scattered that had won the famous battles of Helsingbourg and Gadebush, under a general of mighty hopes; and the King of Denmark had this satisfaction that he had now in his hands the very man who had stopped the progress of his arms, and reduced his town of Altena to ashes. Steinbock, when he evacuated Tonnigen, told the King that he got in thither by stratagem, and that he had deceived the governor. This officer swore to the same effect: choosing rather the shame of having been surprized, than to betray his master's secret.

The duke of Holstein and the bishop, who was the administrator, protested they had faithfully preserved a neutrality; and begged the mediation of the King of Prussia and Elector of Hanover. But all their artifices were in vain without a better force; for the King of Denmark with his own armies and the Czar's, sometime after besieged Wolfen Tonnigen, who surrendered, and at last confessed the secret, which the Danes had more than suspected all along.

This furnished a pretence for the Dane to seize the duke of Holstein's country, and he has taken care to keep the greatest part of it ever since. But though he was so severe to the duke, his treatment of Steinbock was much otherwise, and shewed, that Kings sometimes consider their interests rather than revenge. The incendiary of Altena was suffered to go free in Copenhagen on parole; and the King affected a more than ordinary civility to him, till endeavouring to escape he was seized and proved guilty of the breach of his parole. Then he was confined close, and forced to ask the King's pardon, which he soon obtained.

Pomerania, all but Straelsund, the isle of Rugen, and some neighbouring places, being defenceless, became a prey to the allies, and was sequestered in the hands of the King of Prussia. Bremen was filled with Danish garrisons. At the same time the Moscovites over-ran all Finland, and beat the Swedes, who were quite out of heart; and being much inferior to their foes in number, had no longer the superiority over them in valour.



To complete the misfortunes of Sweden, the king was still resolved to stay at Demotica, and fed himself with the vain expectation of assistance from the Turks.

The Visir, Ibrahim Molla, who had been so obstinately bent upon a war with the Moscovites in opposition to the favourite, was strangled between two doors.

And now the place of Visir was become so dangerous, that none dared to take it: however, when it had been vacant for about six months, Ali Coumourgi the favourite was preferred to it. The King of Sweden lost all hopes, for he knew Coumourgi would never befriend him farther than for his own ends.

He had been buried here in oblivion and inactivity for about eleven months; which following close upon the most violent exercise, made that illness real, which before was but feigned. In Europe they verily thought him dead; and the Regency, which he settled when he left Stockholm, hearing nothing from him, the senate waited on the Princess Ulric Eleonora to desire she would take the Regency in her brother's absence. She accordingly accepted of it; but finding the Senate had a mind to force her to a peace with the Czar and Denmark, that on every side were fallen upon Sweden, which she knew the King would never ratify, she resigned the Regency, and wrote him a full account of the matter to Turkey.

The King received her letters at Demotica, and those despotic notions which he had early imbibed, made him quite forget that ever Sweden had been a free state, or that the Senate used to share in the government of it with their former Kings.

He looked upon them all as servants that took upon them to govern the family in their master's absence; and wrote them word, if that were what they wanted, he would send them one of his boots, to which they might apply for orders.

Wherefore to prevent any attempts in Sweden against his authority, and that he might defend his country; hoping nothing more now from the Ottomans, but depending only on himself, he signified to the grand Visir his desire to be gone, by the way of Germany.

Desalleurs, the French ambassador, who transacted

all the affairs of Sweden, made the proposal. *Well, says the Visir, did not I tell you, that the King of Sweden would be glad to go before the year was at an end? Tell him, he may use his pleasure; but let him resolve, and fix his day, that we may have no more trouble with him, as we had at Bender.*

Count Defalleurs took care to soften these expressions when he told the King. So the day was set; and Charles before he went was willing to make a figure as a King notwithstanding the wretched condition he was in. He made Grothusen his ambassador extraordinary, and sent him in form to take his leave at Constantinople, with a train of fourscore persons richly dressed.

But the embassy was not half so splendid, as the shifts were mortifying to which he was put to furnish the expence of it.

Monsieur Defalleurs lent the King forty thousand crowns. Grothusen by his agents at Constantinople, borrowed at the rate of fifty *per cent.* a thousand crowns of a Jew, of an English merchant two hundred pistoles, and a thousand livres of a Turk.

Thus they got sufficient to enable them to act the splendid farce of the Swedish embassy. At the Porte Grothusen had all the honours that were ever paid to ambassadors extraordinary upon their day of audience. All this was done with a view to get money out of the grand Visir; but that minister was inexorable.

Grothusen made a proposal to borrow a million of the Porte. But the Visir replied coldly, "That his master knew how to give when he had a mind, but it was below him ever to lend; that the King should have all things proper for his journey, and in a manner becoming him who gave it; and that perhaps the Porte might make him some present in gold, but he would not have him expect it."

On the 1st of October 1714 the King began his journey. A Capigi Bashaw with six Chiaoux, went to attend him from the castle of Demirtash, whither he had removed a few days before. The presents they brought him from the grand Seignior were, a large tent of scarlet embroidered with gold, a sabre, the handle of which was set with

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jewels, eight beautiful Arabian horses, with fine saddles and stirrups of massive silver. It is not below an historian to tell, that the Arabian groom, who took care of the horses, gave the King an account of their genealogy; it being the custom there to take more notice of the pedigree of horses than of men: which is not so unreasonable, because if we are careful of the breed, those animals are never known to degenerate.

The convoy consisted of three-score carriages, laden with all sorts of provision, and three hundred horse. The Capigi Balha, knowing that several Turks had advanced money to the King's attendants at excessive interest, said, *That as usury was forbidden by the law of Mahomet, he desired his majesty to settle the debts in such a manner, that his resident at Constantinople should only pay the principal.* No, says the King, *if any of my people have given notes for an hundred crowns, I will pay them though they had but ten from the lender.*

He made a proposal to the creditors to follow him, promising payment of all their debts and charges. A great many of them went to Sweden; and Grothusen was ordered to see them paid.

The Turks, to shew the more respect to their guest, made but short days journeys. But this he could not bear. He got up as usual, about three in the morning; and as soon as he was dressed, he went and called up the Capigi and Chiaoux, and ordered them to march in the dark. This way of travelling suited but ill with the Turkish gravity, and the King was pleased to find it so, and said he should be a little even with them for their treatment of him at Bender.

When he came to the Turkish frontiers, Stanislaus was going thence another way into Germany, intending to retire into the dutchy of Deux-Ponts, a country that borders on the palatinate of the Rhine, and Alsace; which, from the time it was united to that crown by Christiana's successor Charles X. had belonged to the Kings of Sweden. Charles assigned to Stanislaus the revenue of this dutchy, which was then reckoned to be about seventy thousand crowns. And this was the end of so many projects and wars, and expectations. Stanislaus could and would have

made a good agreement with Augustus if Charles had not been so untractable and positive; to make him lose a vast estate in Poland, only that he might preserve the name of King.

This prince resided at Deux-Ponts till Charles's death; which dutchy falling then to the Palatine family, he retired to Wissembourg, a place belonging to the French in Alsace. Upon which M. Sum, envoy from King Augustus, making complaint to the duke of Orleans, regent of France, received this remarkable answer.

*Sir, let the King your master know that France has ever been a refuge for Kings in misfortune.*

When the King of Sweden came to the German frontiers, he found the Emperor had given orders for his reception every where with proper state. Wherever harbingers had fixed his route, great preparations were making to entertain him; and a world of people came to behold the man, whose conquests and misfortunes, whose least actions, and even his repose had made so much noise both in Europe and in Asia. But Charles had no inclination to so much pomp, or to make a shew of the prisoner at Bender, and had even formed a resolution never to enter his city of Stockholm, till he had retrieved his misfortunes by a more auspicious turn of affairs.

So dismissing his Turkish attendants at Targowitz, on the borders of Transylvania; he called his people together in a yard, and bid them take no thought for him, but make the best of their way to Straelsund in Pomerania, about three hundred leagues from thence, up the Baltic Sea.

He took no body with him, but one Daring, a young man, whom he made a colonel afterwards. He parted chearfully with his officers, leaving them in great confusion and concern for him. For a disguise he wore a black peruke, under which he tucked his own hair, a gold laced hat, gray clothes, and a blue clock, passing for a German officer, and rid post with only Colonel Daring.

In all the way he kept clear, as much as he possibly could, of any place that belonged to his open or concealed enemies; and so by the way of Hungary, Moravia, Austria, Bavaria, Wirtemberg, the Palatinate, Westphalia

and Meklenburg, he made almost the tour of Germany, which was farther by half than he need have gone.

Having rid all the first day without stopping, During not being used to such fatigues, fainted away when he came to alight. The King would not stay a moment, but asked During, *What money he had?* he said, *About a thousand crowns. Give me half,* says the King, *I see you cannot go on; I'll go without you.* During begged he would but stay three hours, and he was sure by that time he should be able to go on, and desired him to consider the danger of going alone. The King would not be perswaded, but made him give him the five hundred crowns, and called for horses. During, afraid of what might happen, bethought himself of this contrivance. He takes the post-master aside: *Friend,* says he, *this is my cousin, we are going upon business together, and you see he won't stay for me but three hours; prithee give him the worst horse you have; and let me have a post chaise, or some such thing.*

He put a couple of *ducats* in the man's hand, and was obeyed punctually; so the King had a horse that was both lame and resty. Away he went about ten at night, through the snow, and wind, and rain. His fellow-traveller, after a few hours rest, set out again in a chaise with very good horses. About break of day he overtook the King, with his horse tired, and walking towards the next stage.

Then he was forced to get in with During, and slept upon the straw, and afterwards they never stopped, but went on, on horseback all day, and sleeping in a chaise all night.

Thus, in sixteen days riding, and often in danger of being taken, he came at last upon the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 1714. to the gates of Straelsund, about one in the morning.

The King said, he was a courier from the King in Turkey, and must speak immediately with general Duker the governor. The centinel told him, it was too late, the governor was a-bed, and he must stay till day-light.

The King said it was an affair of consequence; and declared if he did not go directly and awake the governor, they should all be hanged in the morning. At last a ser-



jeant went and called the governor; and Duker thinking it might be some general officer, ordered the gates to be opened, and the courier was brought up to his chamber.

Duker, rubbing his eyes, asked, "What news of his majesty?" The King took him by the shoulder, What, says he, Duker, have my best subjects forgot me? the general could scarce believe his eyes, and jumping out of bed, embraced his master's knees with tears of joy. The news was all over the town in an instant. Every body got up; the soldiers came about the governor's house. The streets were full of people, asking if the news were true? The windows were illuminated, the conduits ran with wine, and the artillery fired.

However, the King was put to bed, which was more than he had been for sixteen days; they were forced to cut off his boots, his legs were so swollen with the fatigue. He had neither linnen, nor clothes; and they provided in haste whatever they could find to fit him. When he had slept some hours, the first thing he did was to review his troops, and examine the fortifications. And that very day he sent out orders into all parts for renewing the war with more vigour than ever against all his enemies.

Europe was now in a condition very different from what it was when King Charles left it in 1709.

The war was over in the South, between Germany, England, Holland, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy. This general peace was owing to some private quarrels that happened in the court of England. The earl of Oxford, an able minister, and the lord Bolingbroke, a man of the finest wit and parts of the age, had got the better of the famous duke of Marlborough, and persuaded Queen Anne to make a peace with Louis XIV. France, being well with England, brought the other powers quickly to an accommodation.

Philip the Vth. grandson to Louis XIV. began to reign in peace over the ruins of the Spanish monarchy. The Emperor, being master of Naples and Flanders, was firmly settled in his vast dominions. Louis XIV. wanted nothing more than that he might finish his long course in peace.

Queen Anne of England died in Aug. 1714. hated by half her people for giving peace to so many nations. Her B—— James Stuart, an unhappy Prince, at his birth almost excluded from the throne, not appearing in England to claim the succession, which in order to settle on him, new laws would have been made in case his party there could have prevailed; George the first, Elector of Hanover, was unanimously acknowledged King of Great Britain: the throne coming to this Elector, not by right of blood, though descended from a daughter of James the first, but by virtue of an act of parliament.

Being in years when he was called to reign over a people whose language he did not understand, and where every thing was strange to him, he looked upon himself rather as Elector of Hanover than as King of England. And his great ambition was to aggrandize his German dominions. He went over every year to visit his subjects there, who adored him. In other things, he was better pleased with what he could enjoy as a man, than as a king. The pride of majesty was what he hated: and his delight was to converse in great familiarity with a few old courtiers. He was not the King that made the greatest figure in Europe; but he was one of the wisest, and perhaps the only one, who could taste upon a throne the pleasures of friendship and a private life.

These were the chief Princes; and this the situation of the South of Europe.

The alterations in the North were of another nature; the Kings there were at war, united all against the King of Sweden.

Augustus had been long restored to the crown of Poland by the assistance of the Czar, and with consent of the Emperor: Queen Anne, and the States General, who though guarantees for the treaty of Altranstadt in Charles's better days, thought no more of their obligations that way, when they found there was nothing more to fear from him.

But Augustus was not quite so easy in his throne. His people's fears of arbitrary power returned with their King, and they were all in arms to make him submit to the *Pacta conventa*, which is a solemn contract between the

King and them; seeming to have called him home for nothing else but to make war upon him. In the beginning of these troubles not a syllable was said of Stanislaus, his party in all appearance being come to nothing, and they remembered no more of the King of Sweden than as of a torrent, which for a while had born down all before it.

Pultowa, and the absence of Charles, by which Stanislaus fell, occasioned also the duke of Holstein's fall, who, being Charles's nephew, was dispossessed of his dominions by the King of Denmark. The King of Sweden had a love for the father, and was greatly concerned at his son's losses: besides, as he never did any thing but for glory, the fall of princes, which himself had set up, was full as grievous to him as all his own losses.

Of that he lost, every one was catching what he could. Frederick William, the new King of Prussia, who seemed as much inclined to war as ever his father was to peace, took Stetin and a part of Pomerania for four hundred thousand crowns, which he advanced to the King of Denmark and the Czar.

George, the Elector of Hanover, who was just come to be King of England, had likewise sequestered into his hands the dutchy of Bremen and Verden, which the King of Denmark had assigned to him as a deposit for threescore thousand pistoles which he lent that Prince. Thus they disposed of Charles's spoils; and whoever was possessed of them as pledges became, by the course of their own interests, as dangerous enemies to him as any of those who took them from him.

The Czar indeed was most of all to be feared. His former defeats, his victories, nay, his very faults, with his diligence to learn, and care to teach his subjects what he learnt, and his incessant labours, contributed to make him a very great man. Riga, Livonia, Ingria, Carelia, part of Finland, and all the countries that had been won by Charles's ancestors, were now subject to the Moscovite.

Peter Alexiowitz, who but twenty years before had not so much as a single vessel on the Baltic, had made himself master of those seas, with a fleet of no less than thirty ships of the line.

He built one of these ships with his own hands, and

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was the best carpenter, the best admiral, and the best pilot in all the North. He himself had sounded every difficult passage from the gulph of Bothnia, quite to the Ocean. And having joined the labours of a common sailor to the experience of a philosopher, and the noble designs of a great Emperor; by his many victories, he had passed through all the degrees that could make him at sea a skilful admiral, as he had done before to make himself a good general at land.

While Prince Gallicfin, a general bred up under him, and the best at assisting his designs, compleated the conquest of Finland, took Vasa, and beat the Swedes: this Emperor put to sea to make a descent on Alan, an island in the Baltick about twelve leagues from Stockholm.

He went upon this expedition in the beginning of July, 1714. while his rival Charles was in bed at Demotica. He embarked at Cronslot, a harbour which he had built a few years before about four miles from Petersbourg. The harbour, the fleet, the officers and sailors, were all the work of his own hands; and he could look on nothing but what he had in a manner himself created.

The Russian fleet came to the heights of Alan on the 15th of July, consisting of thirty ships of the line, fourscore galleys, and a hundred half galleys, with 20000 soldiers. Admiral Apraxin was commander, and the Emperor was rear-admiral. The Swedish fleet came up with them on the 16th, commanded by vice-admiral Erinchild, not so strong by two thirds. They fought however for three hours. The Czar attacked the admiral, and took her after a sharp engagement.

The same day he landed sixteen thousand men at A-land, and took a great many Swedish soldiers who could not get aboard the fleet, and carried them off prisoners in his own ships. Then he returned to Cronslot, with Erinchild's ship, and three lesser ones, a frigate and six galleys that he had taken.

From Cronslot he went on to Petersbourg, followed by his victorious fleet, and the ships he had taken. He was received with a triple discharge of 150 cannon. Then he made his triumphant entry, which pleased him more than

at Moscow, as being in his favourite city, where but ten years before there was not so much as a shed, and that had in it now no less than four and thirty thousand five hundred houses: being himself at the head of a victorious navy, of the first Russian fleet that ever was seen in the Baltic, and among a people who before his time had never known what a fleet was.

At Petersbourg the ceremonies were much the same as those which before had graced the triumph of Moscow; the Swedish vice-admiral was the best of the shew. Peter Alexiowitz appeared as rear-admiral, and a Russian nobleman, one Rommanodowsky, that represented the Czar upon such solemn occasions, was seated upon a throne with twelve senators about him. The rear-admiral presented him a relation of his victories, and was thereupon made vice-admiral in consideration of his services.

An odd ceremony, but which is not amiss, in a country where military subordinations were part of the novelties which the Czar had introduced among them.

The Emperor of Moscow being thus victorious over the Swedes by sea and land, and having helped to chase them out of Poland, was master there in his turn. He made himself a mediator between the King and the Republic, an honour perhaps equal to that of setting up a King. The fortune and figure which Charles used to make were now the Czar's, who really made a better use of those advantages, for his successes were always for the benefit of his country. If he took a town, the industry of the artisans was all transferred to Petersbourg. The manufactures, arts and sciences of any place he took were carried home to enrich and polish his own country: so that he had certainly the best excuse that can be made for any conqueror.

But Sweden had lost all her foreign provinces and had neither trade nor money, nor credit; her veteran troops who were once so formidable, were either killed or died for want. Above one hundred thousand Swedes were slaves in the vast dominions of Moscow; and almost as many more were sold to the Turks and Tartars. The very species of men was visibly decayed in the country; but not-



withstanding all this, their hopes revived as soon as ever they heard their King was come to Straelsund.

Such strong impressions of admiration and respect reigned in the hearts of all his subjects, that multitudes of young people came out of all parts of the country, and offered themselves to be lifted, though there were not hands enough at home to cultivate the land.

*The End of the Seventh Book.*

D d 2

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
CHARLES XII.  
KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK VIII.

The CONTENTS.

*Charles marries his sister to the Prince of Hesse. He is besieged at Straelsund, and escapes to Sweden. The practices of baron Goerts his first minister. Schemes for a reconciliation with the Czar, and of a descent into England. Charles besieges Fredericksball in Norway. Is killed. His character. Goerts beheaded.*

**T**HE King, during these preparations, gave his only surviving sister Ulrica Eleonora in marriage to Frederick Prince of Hesse Cassel.

The queen dowager, grandmother of Charles XIIth and the princess, at fourscore years of age, assisted at the ceremony, on the 4th of April, 1715. in the palace of Stockholm, and died soon after.

This marriage was not honoured with the King's presence, who was now busy in finishing the fortifications of Straelsund, a place of great importance, which was in danger from the Kings of Denmark and Prussia. However he made his brother-in-law generalissimo of all his forces in Sweden. This Prince had served the States-General in the French war: and was esteemed a good general, which contributed not a little to facilitate his marriage with Charles's sister.

Misfortunes now come on as fast as once his victories had done. In June 1715. the King of England's German forces, with those of Denmark, invested the strong town of Wismar. The Danes, the Prussians and the Saxons, to the number of six and thirty thousand, marched in a body to Straelsund, in order to form the siege. Not far from Straelsund five Swedish ships were sunk by the Danes and Prussians. The Czar kept the Baltick with twenty large men of war and one hundred and fifty transports, that had thirty thousand men aboard. He threatned a descent on Sweden, appearing on the coast of Helsingbourg and Stockholm by turns. All Sweden was in arms upon the coasts expecting an invasion. His land forces were chasing the Swedes from all the places they possessed in Finland towards the gulph of Bothnia. But he attempted nothing farther.

At the mouth of the Oder, a river that divides Pomerania, and passing by Stetin falls into the Baltick, there is a little island called Usedom.

Its situation makes it a place of vast importance; for it commands the Oder both on the right and left, and whoever has it is master of the navigation of that river. The King of Prussia had dislodged the Swedes from thence, keeping that as well as Stetin in his hands, and said, he did it purely for the sake of peace. The Swedes however had retaken Usedom, in May 1715. and held two forts there, one called Suine, upon a branch of the Oder of that name, the other Penamondre, of greater consequence, upon another part of the river. The forts and indeed all the island were manned with but 250 Pomeranians, commanded by an old Swedish officer named Duslep or Duslerp, a man who well deserves to be remembered.

On the 4th of August, the King of Prussia sent 1500 foot and 800 dragoons into the island. They landed without opposition on the side of Suine, which fort the Swedish officer had left, being a place of least importance, and unwilling to divide his little company, he retired with them into the castle of Penamondre, resolving to hold out to the last extremity.

So they were forced to make a siege in all the forms. They shipped artillery at Stetin, and sent in a reinforcement of 1000 Prussian foot and 400 horse. On the 18th

they opened the trenches in two places, and played a brisk battery of cannon and mortars. In the time of the siege, a Swedish soldier sent privately with a letter from Charles, found means to land on the island, and slip into Penamondre. He gave the letter to the commander, which was in these words.

**D**O not fire till the enemy comes to the brink of the fosse: stand on your defence till the last drop of blood. I commend you to your good fortune.

CHARLES.

Duslerp having read the note, resolved to obey and die, as he was ordered, to serve his master. The 22d, by break of day the assault was given. The besieged made their fire as directed, and killed abundance; but the fosse was full, the breach large, and the besiegers too numerous. They entered in two different places at once. The commander now thought he had nothing more to do than obey his orders, and sell his life dear: he abandoned the breaches, intrenched his little company, who had all honour and courage enough to go with him, and placed them so that they should not be surrounded. The enemy came on, wondering he would not ask for quarter. But he fought a whole hour, and when he had lost half his soldiers, was killed at last with his lieutenant and his major. There were then a hundred men left, and one officer, who asked their lives, and were taken prisoners. In the commander's pocket they found his master's letter, which was carried to the King of Prussia.

At the time when Charles sustained the loss of Usedom, and the neighbouring islands, which were quickly taken, while Wismar was ready to surrender, Sweden had no longer any fleet but was reduced to the utmost danger, he himself was in Straelsund, besieged by six and thirty thousand men.

Straelsund, a town famous over Europe for the siege the King of Sweden sustained there, is one of the strongest places in Pomerania. It is built between the Baltic and the lake of Franken, near the streights of Gella. There is no way to it at land but by a narrow causeway,

defended by a citadel, and fortifications that were once thought inaccessible. There was in it a garrison of 9000 men, and more than all, the King of Sweden himself. The Kings of Denmark and Prussia besieged it with an army of 36000 men, consisting of Prussians, Danes and Saxons.

The honour of besieging Charles was so engaging a motive to them that they surmounted all obstacles, and the trenches were opened in the night between the 19th and 20th of October 1715.

The King of Sweden said at first, he wondered how any place well manned and fortified could possibly be taken. Not but he had taken many towns himself in the course of his victories, but never any one by regular attack. It was the terror of his arms that gained them. Besides, he never judged of others by himself, nor made a proper account of his enemies. The besiegers carried on their works with great vigour, in which they were strangely assisted by an uncommon accident.

It is well known that the Baltick has no flux and reflux. And the entrenchment that covered the town was thought impracticable, having an unpassable marsh upon the west, and the sea to the east. Never any one had observed before, that in a strong westerly wind the waves of the Baltick do roll back in such a manner as to leave but three feet water under the retrenchment, and they always took it to be here considerably deep. A soldier happening to fall from the top of the retrenchment, was surprized to find a bottom, and imagined that discovery would make his fortune. He deserted, and went to count Wakerbath's quarters, who was general of the Saxon forces, telling him that the sea was fordable, and that it would be easy to carry the Swedes retrenchments. The King of Prussia was not wanting to improve the hint.

The next night the wind being still at west, lieutenant colonel Koppen went into the water with 1800 men, 2000 advanced at the same time upon the causeway that led to the intrenchments: all the Prussian artillery fired, and the Prussians and Danes gave an alarm on the other side.

The Swedes were confident they could deal with those who according to all appearance came on so rashly by the



caufeway; but Koppen with his 1800 men entered the fortification from the sea, fo that they could make no head; and the poft was carried after a prodigious slaughter. Some of the Swedes retired into the town, but the befiegers followed them, and fome got in with thofe that fled. Two officers, and four of the Saxon foldiers, were got upon the draw-bridge; but the Swedes had juft time enough to raife it, and took the men, and fo for that time the town was faved.

They found four and twenty pieces of cannon upon the retrenchment, which they turned againft the town. The fiefge after this fuccefs was carried on with all poffible eagernels, and the town was cannonaded and bombarded without remiffion.

Over-againft Straelfund, upon the Baltick, is the ifland of Rugen, which ferves for a defence to this place, whither the garrifon and people could retire upon occafion, if they had but boats. This ifland was of great confequence to Charles; for he knew if once the enemy were mafters of it, he fhould foon be invefted both by fea and land, and probably buried in the ruins of Straelfund, or elfe be a prifoner to thofe whom he had before fo much defpifed, and treated with fuch feverity. However, the ill ftate of his affairs had not allowed him to fend a fufficient garrifon to Rugen, there being no more than two thoufand regular troops in all upon the ifland.

The enemy had been for three months making all proper difpofition for a defcent thither, which was very difficult; but having built boats for the purpofe, the Prince of Anhalt, by the favour of good weather, landed at laft 12000 men upon the place on the 15th of November.

That very day the King had been defending an out-work for three hours, and coming back very much fatigued, he was told that the Danes and Pruffians were in Rugen. It was eight o'clock at night, and he went directly in a fifher-boat with Poniatofky, Grothufen, During and Dardof, and by nine he got to the ifland. He joined his two thoufand men, who were entrenched near a little haven about three leagues from where the enemy had landed. He marched with them at midnight in great filence. The Prince of Anhalt had already entrenched his

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troops, with a caution that seemed unnecessary. His officers expected nothing in the night, and thought Charles was at Straelsund. But the Prince, who knew what Charles was capable of attempting, ordered a deep *fosse* to be sunk with *chevaux de frise* upon the edge of it, and took as much precaution as if he had to do with an army of superior force.

At two in the morning Charles came to the enemies camp, without making the least noise. His soldiers said to one another, *let us pull up the chevaux de frise*; which words were overheard by the centinels; and the alarm being quickly given, the enemies stood to their arms. The King taking up the *chevaux de frise*, sees a great *fosse*. *Ay*, says he, *is it possible? this is more than I expected!* Not at all discouraged, and knowing nothing of their numbers, nor they of his, for the night favoured him in that, he resolved in an instant, jumped into the ditch, and some of the boldest with him, and all the rest were quickly after him. The *chevaux de frise* that were removed: the levelled earth; trunks and branches of trees as they could be found, and the bodies of the dead who fell by random shot served for fascines. The king, the generals, and the boldest of the officers and soldiers mounted upon the shoulders of others as in assaults. The fight began in the enemies camp; and the vigour of the Swedes put the Danes and Prussians into great disorder; but their numbers being too unequal, the Swedes were repulsed in about a quarter of an hour, and repassed the *fosse*. The Prince of Anhalt pursued them to the plain, little thinking it was Charles who fled before him. The unfortunate King rallied his troops in the field, and the fight was renewed with equal warmth on both sides. He saw his favourite Grothusen and general Dardoff fall, and passed over the last in fighting before he was quite dead. During, his companion from Turkey to Straelsund, was killed before his face.

In the heat of the battle a Danish lieutenant whose name I could never be informed of, knew the King of Sweden, and clapping one hand on his sword, and with the other seizing him by the hair; yield yourself a prisoner, Sir, said he, or I will kill you upon the spot.

Charles drew a pistol from his belt, and with his left hand, fired it at the officer, who died of the shot the next morning. The name of King Charles, which the Dane had pronounced, drew a crowd of enemies together in a moment, the King was immediately surrounded, and received a musket shot below his left breast. The wound, which he only called a contusion, was two fingers deep: the King was then on foot, and in the utmost danger of being either made a prisoner, or slain. Count Poniatosky, at this critical instant, fought near his majesty's person. He had already saved the King's life at Pultowa, and had the good fortune to preserve him once more in the battle of Rugen, and to remount him very seasonably.

The Swedes retired to a part of the island named Alteserra, where there was a fort they were yet masters of. From thence the King returned to Straelsund, obliged to leave those brave troops who had served him so well in that expedition: and they were all made prisoners of war two days after.

Among the prisoners was that unfortunate French regiment, the remains of the battle of Hochstet, which had been in the services of King Augustus and afterwards with the King of Sweden. Most of the soldiers were incorporated into a new regiment belonging to the Prince of Anhalt's son, who was their fourth master. In Rugen the commander of this wandering regiment was then the famous count de Villelongue, who had so generously ventured his life at Adrianople to serve King Charles. He was taken with his men, and but ill rewarded afterwards for all his services, fatigues and sufferings.

The King after all these prodigies of valour having only weakened himself, and continuing to be shut up in Straelsund, and ready to be taken was yet the same as he had been before at Bender; he was surpris'd at nothing. All the day he was making ditches and entrenchments behind the walls; and at night he sallied out upon the enemy. The town however was shattered miserably, the bombs fell thick upon the houses, and half the town reduced to ashes. The inhabitants far from repining, were charmed to admiration at their master, whose temperance, fatigues and courage astonished them beyond expression;

they acted as soldiers under him; following him to the sallies, and were now become as good as another garrison.

One day as the King was dictating to a secretary some dispatches for Sweden, a bomb falling on the house, came through the roof, and burst very near his room. Part of the floor fell down; but the closet where the King was being worked into a thick wall, was not shatter'd; and by a wonderful good fortune none of the splinters came in at the door, though it was open. In this noise and confusion the secretary dropped his pen, and thought the house was coming down. *What ails you*, says the King very calmly, *Why don't you write?* The man could only bring out, *The bomb Sir! Well*, says the King, *and what has that to do with your business?* *Go on.*

An ambassador of France was then shut up in Stralsund with the King of Sweden, M. Colbert, count de Croissy, one of the King's lieutenant generals, and brother to the marquis de Torcy, a famous statesman, related to the great Colbert, whose name in France will be immortal. To send a man on an embassy to Charles, or into trenches was much the same. The King would talk with Croissy for hours together, in places of the greatest danger; while people fell on all sides killed by the bombs and cannon, the King having no sense of it; and the ambassador not caring to say any thing, to make him choose a fitter place to talk of business. Before the siege, this minister took a deal of pains to make an accommodation between the Kings of Sweden and Prussia: but the latter was too high in his demands; and the other would not make any concessions. So that the count de Croissy had only this satisfaction in his embassy, to be acquainted intimately with a man of his singular character. - He has often slept by him upon the same cloke; so that by sharing with him in all his dangers and fatigues, he became very free with him, and Charles was not displeased with that in any one he liked. He would sometimes say to Croissy, *Veni, maledicamus de Rege. Come, now for a little scandal on the King of Sweden.*

Croissy staid in the town till the thirteenth of November: and then with the enemy's permission for him and his baggage, he took his leave of Charles, whom he left

among the ruins of Straelsfund, with but one third remaining of his garrison, and in full resolution to stand an assault.

In four days the enemy made an assault upon the horn-work, which they took twice, and were as often beaten off. The King was always fighting among the grenadiers: but at last their number prevailing, they became masters of it. Charles continued in the place two days after that. The one and twentieth, he staid till midnight upon a little ravelin that was quite destroyed by the bombs and cannon. The next day the chief officers entreated him to stay no longer in a place which could not be defended. But to retreat was now as dangerous as to stay. The Baltick was covered with Moscovite and Danish ships. In the port of Straelsfund there was a small bark with sails and oars. The extreme danger which made such a retreat glorious, induced Charles to consent to it, and he embarked the 20th of December 1715. at night, with only ten persons. They were obliged to break the ice to get out, which took them up several hours before the vessel could make her way. The enemy's admiral had strict orders not to let Charles escape from Straelsfund, but to be sure to take him dead or alive. It happened well for him, that they were under the wind, and so could not come near him. But his greatest danger was in passing by a place called la Barbette in Rugen, where the Danes had fixed a battery of twelve cannon. They fired upon the King, but the sailors made all the sail they could to get clear of them. Two men were killed close by him, and by another shot the mast was shattered. Through all these dangers the King came up with two of his ships that were cruising in the Baltick, and the next day Straelsfund was surrendered, the garrison were made prisoners of war, and the King landed at Isted in Scania, and came to Carelsroon in a very different condition from what he had gone in from thence fifteen years before in a ship of 120 guns to give law to all the North.

Being so near his capital, it was expected he would have gone thither after so long absence. But he could not bear to think of that till he had got some signal victories. Besides, he could not prevail upon himself to revisit a people



who loved him and whom he was compelled to oppress, in order to defend them against their enemies. He was only desirous to see his sister, and sent for her to meet him near the lake Weter in Ostrogothia. He went post with but one to attend him, stayed a day with her, and came back.

At Carelsroon, where he stayed the winter, he ordered new levies every where. He thought his subjects were only born to follow him to war, and he had used them all to think so too.

He lifted many who were but fifteen years old. In several villages there were none left but old men, children and women; and in some places the women plowed the ground alone.

It was yet harder for him to have a fleet. But to bring that about, commissions were given to privateers, who having great privileges, to the ruin of the country, provided him some ships. This was the last shift could be made in Sweden: to support the expence of which, it was necessary to break in upon the people's property, and there was no sort of extortion, but it was practised under the name of taxes. All the houses were searched, and the half of their provisions carried into the King's warehouses. The iron of the country was all bought up for his use, and paid for in paper, which he sold out for ready money. Whoever had any silk in their clothes, or wore perukes, or gilded swords were taxed; and there was a great rate for hearth-money. A people loaded thus with taxes would have rebelled against any other King; but here the most miserable peasant knew his master fared much harder than himself: so they submitted quietly to what their King was always the first to suffer.

In the public dangers, private misfortunes were not thought of. They expected every moment to have the Moscovites, the Danes, the Prussians, the Saxons, and the English making a descent into Sweden. And the fear of this was so strong upon them, and not without reason, that those who had money or valuable goods took care to bury them.

Already there was an English fleet in the Baltick, and their orders were entirely unknown to the Swedes; and

the King of Denmark had the Czar's word for it, that the next Spring he would assist in making a descent into Sweden.

It was an extreme surprize to all Europe, who were attentive to the fortune of Charles, when instead of defending his country, which was threatened with invasions by so many Princes, he marched into Norway in the month of March with 20.000 men.

Since Hannibal, the world has not seen any general, who, when he could not make head against his enemies at home, had ever gone to attack them in their own dominions. His brother-in-law the Prince of Hesse attended him in this expedition.

There is no going from Sweden to Norway, but thro' by-ways that are very dangerous; and after that one meets at every turn with flushes of water from the sea among the rocks, that bridges must be made once a day at least. A very few Danes might have stopped the Swedish army; but such a quick invasion they could not foresee. Europe was yet more at a loss to find the Czar so quiet, and not making a descent into Sweden as he had before agreed with his allies.

This inaction was the consequence of one of the greatest designs, and at the same time the most difficult to be executed of any that were ever formed by the imagination of man.

Henry baron de Goerts, born in Holstein, and minister of a prince who had nothing left but the title of a duke, had done great services to the King of Sweden during his stay at Bender, and was now become his favourite and first minister.

No man ever was at once so bold and so insinuating: so full of shifts at an ill turn: or had such vast designs, or was so active in what he went about: no project was too much for him; and for means he was never at a loss: he would pursue his designs at any rate, with a profusion of presents, promises, oaths, truth or falsehood.

From Sweden he went to France, England and Holland, to lay the foundation of those designs, which he intended afterwards to put in execution. He was capable of inflaming all Europe, and had it in his head. He was in

the cabinet what his master was at the head of an army; and this gave him over Charles a greater ascendant than any minister ever had before him.

This King, who at twenty years of age had given orders to count Piper, was willing to receive them now from baron Goerts, and was the more submissive, because his misfortunes had put him under a necessity of taking advice: besides that, Goerts gave him only such as was suitable to his high courage. He found that of all the Princes who were in league against him, Charles's resentment was chiefly against George Elector of Hanover, and King of England: because he was the only one to whom Charles had never given any cause of complaint, and who engaged in the quarrel under the pretext of mediation, and with the sole view of holding Bremen and Verden, which he bought for a trifle of the King of Denmark, to whom they did not belong.

It was early that he discovered the Czar's secret discontent against the allies, who had all prevented his having any footing in Germany. Wismar, the only town remaining to the Swedes on this side of Germany, was just surrendered to the Danes and Prussians on the 14th of February 1716, who would not so much as suffer the Moscovites who were in Mecklenbourg to appear at the siege. Such repeated signs of diffidence for two years together had provoked the Czar, and did perhaps prevent the utter ruin of Sweden. There are many instances of a number of states in alliance conquered by a single power, but seldom any of a great empire that has been conquered by several allies. For what their strength subdues, their divisions seldom fail to restore.

So long as from the year 1714, the Czar had it in his power to make a descent on Sweden; but whether he could not agree with the Kings of Poland, England, Denmark and Prussia, allies, who had but too much cause to be jealous of his proceedings, or whether it was that he thought his troops not enough seasoned to attack that people at home, whose very peasants had beat the best of the Danish forces; he still took care to put it off.

The want of money was what had likewise hitherto delayed him. For the Czar was one of the greatest Mo-

narchs in the world, but none of the richest, his revenue at that time not amounting to above 18 millions of French livres. He had discovered mines of gold, silver, iron and copper, but the gain to be made of them was very uncertain, and the working them expensive. He had established a large commerce; but the beginnings of it only furnished him with hopes. His new conquests increased his power and his fame, but brought him very little treasure. It was a work of time to bind up the wounds of Livonia, a fertile country, which had suffered very much by a fifteen years war, by fire, sword and plague, almost unpeopled, and become chargeable to the conqueror. The fleets he now maintained, and every day some new enterprize, was what exhausted all his treasures. He had been reduced to the wretched expedient of raising the coin, a remedy that never cures the mischief, and is particularly prejudicial to any country whose imported commodities are larger than their exports.

It was upon these grounds that Goerts had laid the design of a revolution; he was bold enough to propose to the King of Sweden to make his peace at any rate with the Emperor of Moscow, insinuating that the Czar was very angry with the Kings of Poland and England, and giving him withal to understand, that Peter Alexiowitz and Charles together might make the rest of Europe tremble.

There was no making peace with the Czar, without yielding up to him a good many provinces that lie to the east and north of the Baltick: but Goerts made his master sensible, that in yielding such places as the Czar was master of already, and himself in no condition to retrieve, he might have the honour of replacing Stanislaus on the throne of Poland, and setting the person who was called James the II's son upon that of England, besides restoring the duke of Holstein to his dominions.

Charles was pleased with these grand ideas, tho' without building much upon them, and gave his minister leave to act at large. Goerts left Sweden with full powers, which made him a Plenipotentiary to any Princes he had a mind to treat with. His first business was to try how the court of Moscow stood affected, which he did by the

means of one *Arcelkine*, a Scotsman, the Czar's chief physician, a man devoted to the pretender's interest, as most of the Scots were, who did not subsist on favours from the court at London.

This physician set forth to Prince *Menzicoff* the grandeur and importance of such a project, with all the vivacity of a man who was so much interested in the event. Prince *Menzicoff* was pleased with the proposal, and the Czar came into it. Instead of a descent in Sweden, as had been agreed between him and his allies, he sent his troops to winter in *Mecklenbourg*, and came there himself on pretence to settle some disputes between the duke and his nobles: but in reality to pursue his favourite purpose to gain a principality in Germany, for which he hoped to make a bargain with the duke.

The allies were greatly irritated at this proceeding, not caring to have so terrible a neighbour near them, who, if once he should have any footing in Germany, might get to be Emperor, to the oppression of all the sovereigns there. The greater their resentment was, *Goerts's* project went on the better. However, he negotiated with all the confederates, in order to conceal his private intrigues. The Czar amused them all with hopes, and Charles was all this while with his brother-in-law the Prince of *Hesse* in Norway, at the head of 20,000 men; the country was defended by 11,000 Danes divided into several parties; which were all put to the sword by the King and Prince of *Hesse*.

Charles advanced towards *Christiana* the capital of the kingdom: and fortune began again to smile on him in this part of the world: but he never took a proper care to subsist his troops, while an army and fleet of Danes were coming to defend Norway. Charles for want of provision was forced to retire to Sweden, there to wait the issue of his ministers designs.

The affair required the utmost secrecy and vast preparations, two things almost incompatible. But *Goerts* contrived to fetch them from the Asiatick seas. And however odious in appearance the means might be, they were proper enough for the purpose of a descent in



Scotland, and at least would procure men and money, and ships for Sweden.

There had been pirates of all nations, especially English, who were in association infesting the seas of Europe and America. No quarter was given them, and they had retired to Madagascar, a large island on the east of Africa: being quite desperate and famous for actions, which wanted nothing but justice to make them heroic. They looked for a Prince who would receive them under his protection; but the law of nations had shut them out from every harbour in the world.

When they knew that Charles was come back to Sweden, they had great hopes, that he being a Prince who was fond of war, and forced to be so engaged, and wanting a fleet and soldiers, would be glad of composition with them upon easy terms; so they sent a person in a Dutch ship to propose to Baron Goerts that they might be received at Gottenburg, where they promised to be ready with threescore ships loaded with treasures.

The baron brought the King into the business, and Kromstrom and Mendel, two Swedish gentlemen, were sent soon after to transact it with them.

But a more honourable and likely help was afterwards found in cardinal Alberoni, an extraordinary genius, who managed the affairs of Spain long enough for his own reputation, tho' not for the good and glory of that kingdom.

He came with great willingness into the proposal of setting James the II's pretended son upon the throne of England. However, as he was but just come into the ministry, and Spain was to be settled before he could pretend to overturn other kingdoms, there was no great likelihood of his being able to put a hand to the work for a long time; yet in less than two years he had done so much for Spain, that she made quite another figure in Europe; and they say, the Turks were engaged to fall upon the Emperor, and measures taken to depose the duke of Orleans from the Regency of France, and King George from the throne of Great-Britain: such danger there is in a single man, who has an absolute power in any country, and has likewise the sense and spirit to make use of it.

Goerts, having thus scattered in the courts of Moscow and Spain the first sparks of the flame he intended to kindle, went privately to France, and from thence to Holland, where he saw the adherents to the pretender's party.

He was well informed of the strength, the number, and disposition of the disaffected in England; what money they could raise, and what men they could bring into the field. They asked no more than ten thousand men, and were pretty sure of success, if they had but that assistance.

Count Gyllenbourg, the Swedish ambassador in England, instructed by Goerts, had several meetings at London; he gave them great encouragement, and promised all they could wish. The pretender's friends with the chief of the disaffected party went so far as to advance considerable sums, which Goerts received in Holland. He negotiated the purchase of several ships, and bought six in Great-Britain with all sorts of ammunition.

Then he sent privately some officers to France, particularly the Chevalier de Folard, who having made thirty campaigns in the French service, without improving his fortune, had been to offer his service to the King of Sweden, not with any considerable views of interest, but rather to serve under a King of that surprizing reputation. Folard likewise hoped to recommend to that Prince the new discoveries he had made in the art of war, which he had always studied as a philosopher, and has since published his discoveries in a commentary on Polybius. Charles was pleased with his notions, and as he himself made war in a manner entirely new, was never governed by custom, he intended to make use of the Chevalier de Folard in his descent on Scotland. This gentleman performed in France all the secret orders of Goerts. A great many French, but more Irish officers, came into this new design, which was working at the same time in England, France, Spain and Moscow; and the branches of it privately spread throughout all Europe.

But all these preparations were nothing to baron de Goerts, though pretty well for a beginning. The main point without which there could be no success was, to

settle a peace between the Czar and Charles; and many difficulties there were in the way. The baron Osterman, minister of that state in Moscow, was not so ready to agree with Goerts. He was as cautious as the other was warm. One was for letting things ripen by degrees; the other would reap as well as sow at once. Osterman was afraid his master, being pleased with the design, would grant terms too advantageous to Sweden; and so delayed the conclusion of the affair.

Very luckily for Goerts the Czar himself came to Holland in the beginning of the year 1717, his design was to visit France, and he had a desire to see that famous nation which for above a century past has been censured, envied, and imitated by all its neighbours: he there intended to satisfy his curiosity of seeing and learning; and to exercise his politics.

Goerts had two conferences with the Emperor at the Hague, and by that made a better progress than he could have done in six months with plenipotentiaries. Every thing went well. His great designs appeared impenetrable; and he hoped they would only be discovered in the execution. All his discourse at the Hague turned upon peace, and he openly declared that he regarded the King of Great-Britain as the dispenser of pacification in the North; and he pressed exceedingly to have a congress at Brunswick, where the interests of Sweden and its enemies might be settled amicably.

The first who discovered these intrigues was the duke of Orleans, regent of France: for he had spies in all the courts of Europe. These sort of men, whose trade it is to sell the secrets of their friends, and who get their living by being informers, and frequently by publishing calumnies, were mightily increased in his time in France; so that one half of the kingdom were spies upon the other. The duke, having personal obligations to the King of England, made a discovery of the whole design against him.

At the same time the Hollanders taking umbrage at Goerts's behaviour, communicated their suspicions to the English ministry. Goerts and Gyllenbourg were go-

ing on briskly, when one was seized at the Hague, and the other in London.

Gyllenbourg as ambassador from Sweden, having offended against the law of nations by this conspiracy against a Prince to whom he was sent in a public character, they did not scruple in England the violation of his person. But it was thought exceeding strange in the States General to imprison the baron de Goerts out of mere complaisance to the King of England. Nay, they went so far as to appoint count Velderen to question him. This was carrying it very far; but as they could make nothing of it, it only turned to their own confusion. Goerts asked the count *de Velderen, if he knew him?* Yes, Sir, says the Dutchman. *Well then,* says the baron *de Goerts, if you do, you must needs know that I shall say but just what I please.* Such a thing was scarce ever heard of before; all the foreign ministers, particularly the marquis de Monteleone, the Spanish ambassador in England, protested against the wrong done to the persons of Goerts and Gillenbourg. Nothing could excuse the Hollander for breaking a law so sacred, in seizing the King of Sweden's prime minister, who had never done any thing against them; and to act so directly contrary to that valuable freedom, which has brought among them so many foreigners, and has been the only cause of all their greatness.

The King of England had done no more than right in seizing an enemy: what they found among Gillenbourg's papers of letters between him and Goerts were printed to justify the King's proceedings. The King of Sweden was in Scania, when the printed letters came with the news of his minister's being seized. He only smiled, and asked, *if his letters were printed too?* And ordered the English resident, and all his family at Stockholm, to be seized.

But he could not take the same revenge upon the Dutch, because they had no minister then at the court of Sweden. However, he took no notice one way or other of the thing; for he was too haughty to deny what he had once approved; and wiser than to own a project that had proved abortive; so he kept a disdainful silence towards England and Holland.

The Czar's behaviour was quite otherwise. As he was

not named but only hinted at by distant intimations in the letters of Goerts and Gyllenbourg, he wrote a long letter full of civilities to the King of Great-Britain upon the discovery, with great assurances of his sincere friendship. King George received his protestations without crediting them, tho' he seemed to suffer himself to be persuaded of their reality, and pretended to believe them. A plot laid by private men, if once it is blown, is at an end; but where Kings are concerned, a discovery does but make it go on the faster. The Czar came to Paris in May 1717. and had something to do besides seeing the wonders of art and nature there; the academies, the public libraries, the cabinets of the curious, and the royal palaces. He made a proposal to the regent, which, had it been complied with, might have completed the greatness of the Moscovites. His design was to make peace with the King of Sweden, who would yield to him many great countries: to take from the Danes their power in the Baltick: to weaken the English by a civil war; and bring to Moscovy all the commerce of the North. He had thoughts too of setting up Stanislaus against King Augustus; so that the fire being kindled every where, he might be able to blow it up or damp it, as he should see occasion. With this view he proposed to the regent to be a mediator between Sweden and Moscovy, and to come to an alliance offensive and defensive with them and Spain. This treaty, though so very natural, and for the good of those nations, and though it would put the balance of Europe into their hands, was yet rejected by the duke of Orleans: for he did exactly the reverse of all this, making a league with the Emperor and the King of England. Reasons of state had then such influence over all Princes, that the Czar was going to declare war against his old ally Augustus, and to take part with Charles his mortal enemy; while France in favour of the English and Germans, was going to war with a grandson of Louis the XIVth, after having so long supported him against those very enemies at such expence of blood and treasure. All that the Czar could get by this application, was that the regent should interpose for the enlargement of baron Goerts and Gyllenbourg. He returned to Moscovy



about the end of June, having shewn France a rare example of an Emperor travelling for instruction. But most of the people in France saw nothing of him but a rough unpolished outside, the effects of his education, while the legislator, and the great man who had founded a new nation, quite escaped their observation.

What he looked for from the duke of Orleans, he quickly found in Cardinal Alberoni, who now governed all in Spain. Alberoni wished for nothing more than to establish the Pretender; first, as he was a minister of Spain which had been so ill used by the English; then as having a personal pique against the duke of Orleans for his close alliance with England against Spain; besides, that he was a priest of that church, for which the Pretender's father has so injudiciously lost his crown.

The duke of Ormond, as much loved in England, as the duke of Marlborough was admired, had left his country at the time of King George's accession, and was now in Spain. He went with full commission from the King of Spain and the Pretender, to meet the Czar upon his way to Mittau in Courland, and had with him one Jernegan, an Englishman of sense and spirit. The business was to ask the Princess Anna Petrona, the Czar's daughter, in marriage for King James's pretended son, in hopes that such an alliance would bring the Czar into the interest of that Prince. This proposal had like to have marred, instead of mending matters; for baron Goerts, among the rest of his schemes, had long intended this lady for the duke of Holstein who married her afterwards. As soon as he heard of the duke of Ormond's negotiation, he grew jealous, and did all he could to defeat it. He was set at liberty in August, and so was count Gillenbourg, without the King of Sweden so much as offering any excuse to the King of England, or expressing the least dislike of what his minister had been doing.

At the same time the English resident, and all his family at Stockholm, were released, where their treatment had been a great deal worse than Gillenbourg's at London.

When Goerts had obtained his liberty he became an implacable enemy; for besides his other views, he want-

ed now to be revenged. He went post to the Czar, who was better pleased than ever with him; for he undertook in less than three months, with but one plenipotentiary from Moscow, to remove all obstructions to a peace with Sweden. He takes up a map of the Czar's own drawing, and making a line from Wibourg by the lake Ladoga, quite to the frozen ocean, promised to bring his master to part with all that lay to the east of that line, besides Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia. Then he began upon the marriage of the Czar's daughter to the duke of Holstein, giving great hopes that the duke would readily surrender to him his country for an equivalent: and if once he got to be a member of the empire, the imperial crown would come of course to him or some of his descendants. Thus he pleased the Czar's ambition, took the Pretender's mistress from him, but opened a way for him in England, and brought about the whole of all his own designs at once.

The Czar named the isle of Aland for the conference between Osterman and Goerts; and desired the duke of Ormond to return to Spain, lest the English court should take the alarm; for he had no mind to break with them till the time of the invasion. But Jernegan the duke's confidant, who was to manage matters, stay'd at Petersburg, lodging very privately, and going only out of nights, and whenever he saw any of the Czar's ministers, it was always in the disguise of a peasant or a Tartar.

As soon as the duke of Ormond went, the Czar took care to make a merit of it to the King of England, that he sent away the greatest man of the Pretender's party. And the baron de Goerts returned to Sweden with great hopes of success.

He found his master at the head of 30,000 regular troops, and all the coast guarded by the militia. The King wanted nothing but money; but public credit was lost at home and abroad. France had afforded him some subsidies in the latter days of Louis XIV. but the duke of Orleans having other views, would give him none. He was promised some from Spain; but that country was not yet in a condition to supply him. Baron Goerts upon this set on foot a project he had tried before he went to France

and Holland. It was, to make a piece of copper, of the same value as silver: so that a half-penny, with the Prince's mark, might pass for thirty or forty pence: as sometimes the governors of besieged towns have paid their soldiers and the people in leathern money till they could get better. This sort of money, made at an emergency, which can never have any credit if it be not punctually made good, is no better than bills, whose imaginary value may easily exceed the fund of money that any state is worth.

Such expedients are of excellent use in a free country, and have been the saving often of a republic; but in a monarchy nothing can be more destructive; for the people quickly growing suspicious the minister is reduced to the necessity of being unpunctual to his word, the imaginary money encreases fast upon them; and those, who have any species by them, secure it under ground; which makes the whole machine fall to confusion not without great mischief. This was then the case of Sweden.

Baron Goerts had paid out his new coin with a good deal of discretion: but was quickly carried beyond his first design by the rapidity of a motion which he knew not how to govern. All sorts of goods and provisions were grown excessive dear, so that he was obliged to multiply his copper coin. The more there was of it, the less the value was; and the country found it such a grievance, that the general cry rose against baron Goerts. Such was the veneration the people had for Charles, that they could not hate him; but the weight of their displeasure fell upon his minister, who being a foreigner, and at the head of the treasury, was sure to suffer under the public hatred.

A tax that he intended on the clergy completed all. The priests are but too apt to make it God's cause whenever they are touched; and cried him down for an arrant atheist; because he attempted to meddle with their money; and the new money being stamped with the figures of heathen Gods, they took occasion from thence to call those pieces, the Gods of baron Goerts.

The ministry, growing jealous of him, fell in with this universal hatred: and the less their power was, they were the more implacable. The King's sister and the

Prince her husband had reason to fear, that his birth obliging him to befriend the duke of Holstein, he might bring it about at last to make him King of Sweden. Never any in the nation liked him but the King who was the more confirmed in his good liking by the public hatred. He confided in him with entire resignation, giving him absolute power at home; and trusting to him without reserve in all transactions with the Czar, especially as to the conference at Aland, which of all things he wished him to press with the utmost expedition.

The affairs of the treasury demanding his attendance and immediate care, as soon as ever he had put them on a tolerable foot, he went away directly to finish with Osterman the great work he had in hand.

And these were the preliminaries of that alliance, which was to have wholly changed the face of affairs in Europe, as they were found after Goerts's death among his papers.

The Czar was to keep all Livonia, part of Ingria and Carelia, leaving all the rest to Sweden. He was to join with Charles in restoring Stanislaus in Poland, sending thither 80000 men, to dethrone that very King on whose side he had been fighting for ten years before; he was to furnish ships to carry 10000 Swedes to Britain, and thirty thousand into Germany. The forces of both were to fall upon the King of England's German dominions, especially those of Bremen and Verden; the same troops were to restore the duke of Holstein, and force the King of Prussia to an accommodation, by parting with a good deal of his new acquisition. Charles began to take upon him as if his own victorious troops, joined by the Czar's, had done all this: and insisted with the Emperor to execute the treaty of Altranstadt. But the court of Vienna would scarce vouchsafe an answer to a proposal from one of whom they had so little to fear.

The King of Poland was not altogether so secure, but saw the storm a coming. The Polish nobility had formed a confederacy against him, and he had been obliged ever since his re-establishment on the throne, to be engaged in wars or treaties with his own subjects. The Czar, who was now become a dangerous mediator, was much to be feared, for he had an hundred galleys near Dant-

zick and 40,000 men hovering upon the frontiers of Poland. All the North was full of jealousy and apprehensions. Flemming the most distrustful man living, and of all men living the most to be distrusted, was the first who suspected the designs of the Czar and the King of Sweden in favour of King Stanislaus; so he endeavoured to have this prince seized in the dutchy of Deux-Ponts, as James Sobieski had been surprized before in Silesia.

Saissan, one of those turbulent and enterprising Frenchmen who wander into foreign countries to try their fortune, had lately brought several of his countrymen like himself into the service of the King of Poland. He imparted to Fleming a project by which he undertook to go with thirty French officers, whom he had wrought into such a disposition, that they were determined to seize Stanislaus in his palace, and convey him a prisoner to Dresden. This project was received with approbation; enterprizes of that nature were very frequent in those days. Some of those wretches, who in Italy are called Bravos, had acted such a scene in the Milanese, during the last war between Germany and France: and even since that transaction several Frenchmen, who had fled to Holland for refuge, had the presumption to penetrate as far as Versailles, with an intention to carry off the Dauphin, and they seized the person of the first equery, almost under the windows of the castle where Lewis the fourteenth resided.

Saissan, in pursuance of his project, had disposed his men and post horses in order to surprize Stanislaus; but the enterprize was discovered the night before its intended execution. Several of the associates knew what had happened, and some were seized. They could not expect to be treated like prisoners of war, but rather as Banditti: but Stanislaus, instead of punishing them suitably to their demerit, contented himself with reproaching them with an amiable intermixture of goodness and humanity. He even distributed money among them to defray their expences in their return to Poland, and made it apparent, by this generous proceeding, that his rival Augustus had reason to fear him.

In the mean time Charles was going to make a second attempt upon Norway, in October 1718, and he had laid



matters so, that he did not doubt to be master of that kingdom in six months. He rather chose to go and conquer rocks, amidst snow and ice, in the severity of the winter which kills the very animals even in Sweden, where the air is less rigorous, than regain his beautiful provinces in Germany; but he hoped his new alliance with the Czar would soon put him in a condition to retake them. Besides, his ambition was pleased with the thought of forcing a kingdom from his conquering enemy.

At the mouth of the river Tistendall, near the bay of Denmark, between the towns of Bahus and Anflo, stands Fredericshall, a place of great strength and importance, which is reckoned to be the key of that kingdom. Charles sat down before it in the month of December. The cold was so extreme, that the soldiers could hardly break the ground. They might as well have opened trenches in a rock; but the Swedes never thought much of any fatigues in which they saw their King take his share so readily; and Charles himself never suffered more than now. His constitution by eighteen years labour was hardened to that degree, that he would sleep in the open field in Norway, in the midst of winter, upon boards or straw, covered only with his cloke, without prejudicing his health. Several of the soldiers in their posts fell down dead with cold, and others who were ready to die durst not complain when they saw their King bear what they suffered. A little before this expedition, hearing of a woman in Scania, named Joan Dotter, who had lived several months upon nothing but water; he, who had studied all his life to bear the worst extremes that human nature can support, was resolved to try how long he was able to fast. He neither eat nor drank for five days, and on the sixth, in the morning, he rid two leagues, and then alighted at the tent of his brother-in-law the Prince of Hesse, where he eat very heartily, without feeling the least disorder, either from his long fasting, or his full eating afterward.

With such a body of iron, and a soul of so much strength and courage in every condition, there was not one of all his neighbours who did not fear him.

On the 11th of December, being St. Andrew's day, he

went about nine at night to see the trenches; and finding the parallel not advanced to his mind, he was a little displeased; but Mons. Megret, a French engineer, who conducted the siege, assured him, the place would be taken in eight days time. *We shall see*, says the King, and going on with the engineer to examine the work, he stopped at a place where the *boyau* made an angle with the parallel, and keeling upon the inner *talus*, he leaned with his elbows on the parapet, to look upon the men, who were carrying on the trenches by starlight.

The least circumstances that relate to the death of so great a man as Charles XII. are very important. I must therefore take upon me to say that all the conversation which has been reported by several writers, and M. de la Motraye among the rest, to have passed between the King and Megret the engineer, is absolutely false. And the following account is what I know to be the truth of this event.

The King stood with half his body exposed to a battery of cannon exactly levelled at the angle where he was. Two Frenchmen were all who were then near his person, one was monsieur Siker his aid-de-camp, a man of great courage and conduct, who came into his service in Turkey; and was particularly attached to the Prince of Hesse; the other was this engineer. The cannon fired upon them with chain-shot, to which the King stood most exposed. Not far behind was count Swerin, who commanded the trenches. Count Posse, captain of the guards, and one Kulbert an aid-de-camp received his orders. Siker and Megret saw the King fall upon the parapet, fetching a deep sigh. They ran to him, but he was already dead. A ball of half a pound had struck him on the right temple, and made a hole big enough to turn their fingers in. His head lying over the parapet, the left eye was beat in; and the right was forced quite out of its socket. He was dead the moment he received this; but he had the force in that instant to put his hand by a natural motion to the guard of his sword, and lay in that posture. At this, Megret, a man of great indifference, only said, *Let us be going, the play is done*. Siker ran immediately, and told count Swerin, and they all agreed to keep it pri-

vate till the Prince of Hesse could be informed of it. They covered the corps with a gray cloke: Siker put him on his hat and wig, and he was carried by the name of captain Carlsbern through the troops, who saw their dead King pass, little thinking who it was.

The Prince gave orders presently that none should stir out of the camp, and that all the passes to Sweden should be guarded, till he could take measures for his wife to claim the crown, and to exclude the duke of Holstein, who might possibly pretend to it.

Thus fell Charles XII. King of Sweden, at the age of six and thirty years and a half, having known the extremes of prosperity, and of adversity, without being softened by the one, or in the least disturbed for a moment at the other. All his actions, even those of his private life, are almost beyond any measure of probability. Perhaps he was the only man, to be sure he was the only King, who ever had lived without weakness. He carried all the virtues of a hero to that excess, that they became as dangerous as any of the opposite vices. His resolution grown to obstinacy occasioned his misfortunes in Ukrania, and kept him five years in Turkey. His liberality degenerating into profusion ruined Sweden. His courage growing into rashness was the occasion of his death. His justice has been sometimes cruelty: and in his latter years, the maintaining his prerogative came not far short of tyranny. His great qualities, any one of which had been enough to make another prince immortal, were a misfortune to his country. He never began a quarrel with any, but he was rather implacable than wise in his resentment. He was the first who ever had the ambition to be a conqueror, without wishing to encrease his dominions. His desire to gain kingdoms was only that he might give them away. The passion he had for glory, for war, and for revenge, made him too little of a politician, without which the world never before saw any Prince a conqueror. Before a battle he was full of confidence; exceeding modest after a victory, and in a defeat undaunted. Sparing others no more than himself, he made a small account of his own or his subjects lives or labours; a man extraordinary rather than a great man, and fitter to be admired than imitated.

His life however may be a lesson to Kings, and teach them, that a peaceful and happy government is more to be desired than so much glory.

Charles XII. was tall and nobly shaped, he had a fine forehead, large blue eyes full of sweetness, and a handsome nose: but the lower part of his face was disagreeable, and often disfigured by a frequent laugh which hardly opened his lips; he had little beard or hair; he spoke little, and it was habitual to him to answer only with that laugh. At his table there was always great silence. With all that inflexible temper of his, he was timorous and bashful, and would have been at a loss in conversation, for having given himself so wholly up to war, he knew but little of society. Before his long leisure in Turkey, he had never read any thing but Caesar's commentaries and the history of Alexander. But he had writ some observations upon war and his own campaigns, from 1700 to 1709, which he owned to the chevalier de Folard, and said the manuscript was lost at the unfortunate battle of Pultowa.

As to religion, though the sentiments of a Prince ought not to influence those of other men; and the opinion of a King so little informed as Charles, can be of no great weight in such matters; yet it is proper that men's curiosity should be satisfied in this as well as other particulars concerning him. I have it from the gentleman who gave me most of the materials of this history, that Charles was a serious Lutheran till the year 1707; he then saw the famous philosopher Monf. Leibnitz at Leipfick, who was a great free-thinker, and talked very freely, having instilled his notions into more Princes than one. Charles learned from the conversation of this philosopher a good deal of indifference for Lutheranism; which he carried afterwards much farther, when he had more time in Turkey, and had seen so many sorts of professions.

Of all his old opinions he retained but one, which was absolute predestination, a doctrine that favoured his courage, and justified his temerity. The Czar had much the same opinions as to religion and fate: but he was more free to talk of them, as he did indeed of every thing else with his favourites very familiarly; for he had this ad-

vantage over Charles, that he had studied philosophy, and was a good speaker.

I cannot help taking notice here of a slander that is too often spread by credulous or ill meaning people, who will have it, that when Princes die, they were either poisoned or assassinated. And the story went in Germany, that Monsieur Siker was the man who killed the King of Sweden. That brave officer was very uneasy at the calumny a good while: and one day talking of it to me, he said these very words, *I might have killed the King of Sweden, but I had such a veneration for the hero, that though I had intended it, I could not offer to do it.*

As soon as he was dead, the siege of Frederichshall was raised. The Swedes, who thought his glory rather a burthen than a happiness, made peace with all their neighbours as fast as they could; and soon put an end to that absolute power, which baron Goerts had made them weary of. The states went to a free election of King Charles's sister for their Queen; and obliged her solemnly to renounce all hereditary right to the crown, that she might hold it only by the people's choice. She promised with repeated oaths never to set up arbitrary power. And afterwards, her love of power giving way to conjugal affection, she yielded the crown to her husband, and brought the states to choose him, who ascended the throne upon the same conditions.

Baron Goerts was seized immediately upon Charles's death, and condemned by the senate of Stockholm to be beheaded under the gallows; an instance rather of revenge than justice: and a cruel insult on the memory of a King whom Sweden yet admires.

THE END.

*See Note at end of Index*



A  
L E T T E R

To the Right Honourable the

LORD \* \* \* \* \*

GIVING

A Description of the Persons, Behaviour, &c. of the King of Sweden, King Augustus, and King Stanislaus.

“ I Will tell you as a particular friend (and that even  
“ without leave, which ought to have been) I did  
“ venture the other day to ramble into Saxony to satisfy  
“ my curiosity, in seeing those different Kings there, and  
“ penetrating as far as I could how matters stood there,  
“ and how our fate is like to be determined by that Gothic hero, who with a handful of men makes himself  
“ dreaded and courted by all the powers of Europe. As  
“ for his person, he did not *dementiri* the description I  
“ had of him; he is a tall handsome gentleman, but im-  
“ moderately dirty and slovenly; his behaviour and carriage more rustic than you can imagine in so young a  
“ man should be. And that the outside of his quarters  
“ should not bely the inside, he has chosen the dirtiest  
“ place and one of the saddest houses in all Saxony;  
“ the cleanest place is the court before the house, where  
“ every body is to alight off their horses, and is up to the  
“ knees in dirt, where his horses stand with hardly any  
“ halters, and sackings instead of clothes, without either  
“ racks or mangers. The horses have rough coats, thick  
“ bellies, switch tails; the grooms that look after them  
“ seem not to be better clothed nor better kept than their  
“ horses; one of which stands always saddled for the  
“ mighty monarch, who runs out commonly alone, and  
“ beltrides his steed, and away he gallops before any one  
“ else is able to follow him: sometimes he will go ten  
“ or twelve of those country miles in a day, which is a-

H h

“bout forty or fifty of our English miles, now in the  
“winter time, bespattered all over with dirt like a po-  
“stilion. I should make my letter too long, if I should  
“tell you his dress, his eating and sleeping. But not to  
“let it entirely alone, I will tell you his coat is plain  
“blue with ordinary brass buttons, the skirts pinned up  
“behind and before, which shews his majesty’s old lea-  
“ther waistcoat and breeches, which they tell me are  
“sometimes so greasy, that they may be fried: but when  
“I saw him they were almost new, for he had been a  
“gallant a little before, and had been to see king Augustus’s  
“queen, upon her return to Leipfick; and to be fine,  
“he put on those new leather breeches, spoke not above  
“three words to her, but talked to a foolish dwarf she  
“had about a quarter of an hour, and then left her. He  
“wears a black crape cravat, but the cape of his coat is  
“buttoned so close about it that you cannot see whether  
“he has any or no: his shirt and wristbands are common-  
“ly very dirty, for he wears no ruffles, nor gloves, but  
“on horseback: his hands are commonly of the same  
“colour with his wristbands: so that you can hardly  
“distinguish them; his hair is light brown, very greasy  
“and very short, never combed but with his fingers. He  
“sits upon any stool or chair he finds in the house, with-  
“out ceremony at dinner, and begins with a great piece  
“of bread and butter, having stuck his napkin under his  
“chin; then drinks with his mouth full out of a great  
“silver old fashioned beaker small beer, which is his only  
“liquor; at every meal he drinks about two English  
“bottles full, for he empties his beaker twice; between  
“every bit of meat he eats a piece of bread and butter,  
“which he spreads with his thumbs. He is never above  
“a quarter of an hour at dinner; eats like a horse, speaks  
“not one word all the while. As soon as he rises, his life-  
“guards sit down at the same table to the same victuals.  
“His bed-chamber is a very little dirty room, with bare  
“walls, no sheets nor canopy to his bed; but the same  
“quilt that lyes under him turns up over him, and so  
“covers him. His writing-table is a slit deal, and only  
“a stick to support it; and instead of a standish, a wood-  
“en thing with a sand-box of the same. He has a fine

“ gilt Bible by his bed-side, the only thing that looks  
“ fine in his equipage. He is a very handsome man, well  
“ shaped, and a very good face, no stern countenance,  
“ but he is very whimsical and positive, which makes all  
“ the allies afraid of him; for he risques himself and his  
“ army as easily as another would fight a duel. He has  
“ not shewn much generosity to King Augustus, who sent  
“ Charte Blanche to make peace, and to recommend him-  
“ self to his friendship; but does still every day very  
“ hard things to that poor Prince, whom he treats always  
“ like one whom he has entirely in his power.

“ King Augustus is as well bred a man as you shall see,  
“ very obliging in his person and behaviour, and liked  
“ by every one. But now he pays for all his false, un-  
“ faithful politics, and finds, too late, that one Prince  
“ should not entirely submit to another. But that my  
“ letter is too long already, I would give you some ac-  
“ count of the Polish court of King Stanislaus; for being  
“ *incognito*, (only with a friend and one servant) impos-  
“ sible to be known, I took a tour to Leipfick, where I not  
“ only saw that King, but he very civilly came and spake  
“ to me and my friend, seeing we were strangers. His  
“ court has a much better air than that of his maker;  
“ and his mother and wife were there, a couple of well  
“ bred women, well dressed, and both spoke very good  
“ French. He is a tall handsome young man, with a  
“ great pair of whiskers, in the Polish dress, inclinable to  
“ be fat, and a little upon the dirty, as all the Poles are.  
“ He was lodged in a very pretty castle belonging to  
“ King Augustus, but against that King’s will, who will  
“ never see him, and cannot abide to hear him spoke of;  
“ and yet the Swedes would oblige him, which they say  
“ he ought to do by the treaty.

“ You used to tell me, my dear lord, you loved to hear  
“ of my rambles, and I believe this may please you better  
“ than my former, being a very true description of this  
“ *mighty and dirty Monarch.*”

Incerti cujusdam E P I G R A M M A.

**H**ERCULIS invadunt colubri incunabula Sueci;  
Sibilat hinc Moschus, Danus et inde tumet;  
Versicolor linguam jaculatur Saxo trifulcam:  
Sed puer intrepida compremittit ora manu.  
Nate Jovis laurum CAROLO concede; duorum  
Tu tantum caneris victor, at ille trium.



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F I N I S.

The Author of the history of  
the wars of Charles viii a Scots  
Gentleman makes no insinuation  
of the Kings being assassinated  
which I think he would have  
done if he had believed it as he  
was in the expedition at same  
time the report of the assassination  
must have been believed in the  
North for Peter H Bruce in his  
Memoirs mentions that as he  
was dining at an Ordinary  
in Riga, Anno 1724 there  
was at the Table a Swedish  
Colonel and while at Dinner  
the Governor sent & ordered  
him in the Emperors name  
to leave Riga immediately  
otherwise he would be pro =

=ceeded against as a Traitor  
and the Colonel immediately  
left the room - Bruce was in-  
formed that he was suspected  
of having shot the King - The  
Colonel went into Courland &  
from thence to Poland and he  
intended to go to Turkey and  
it was generally supposed he  
had been murdered in Poland  
- Bruce <sup>says</sup> it was observed that  
while the Colonel resided in  
Riga large remittances were  
made to him from Stockholm  
which <sup>made</sup> it be suspected that  
he had been bribed to commit  
the Assassination. —

It was remarkable  
that the moment the King



was dead the Siege of Frederick  
shall was raised and the  
Swedes retired from Norway  
altho they were in a very pro-  
-sperous situation which looks  
as if the Nation wished to be  
free of the War and took  
that way of terminating it

